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By MAJOR ALEXANDER P. DE SEVERSKY

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THE AMERICAN MERCURY

VOLUME LV

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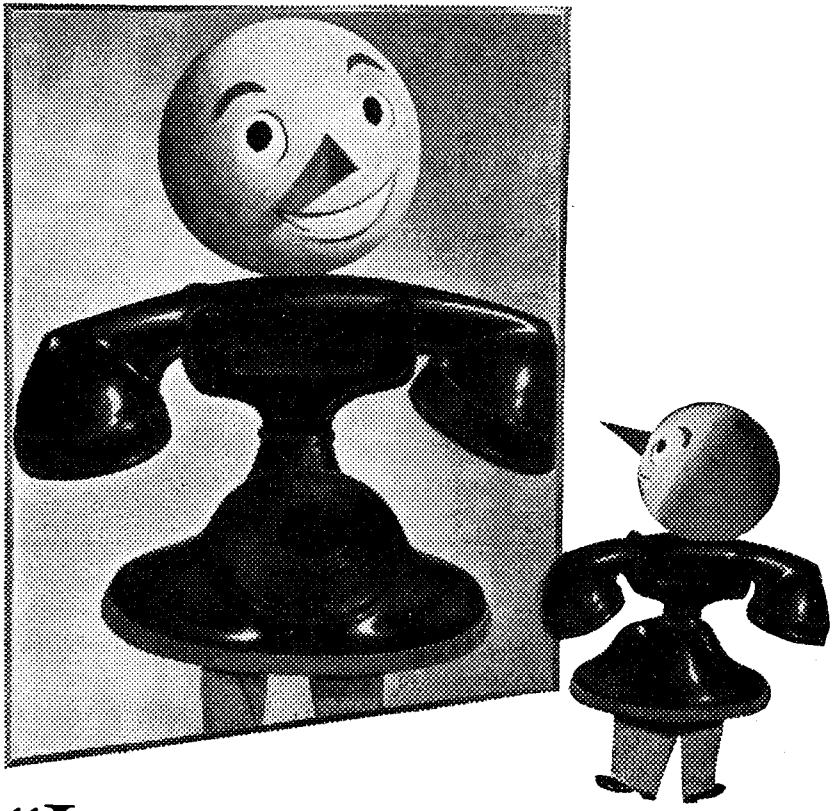

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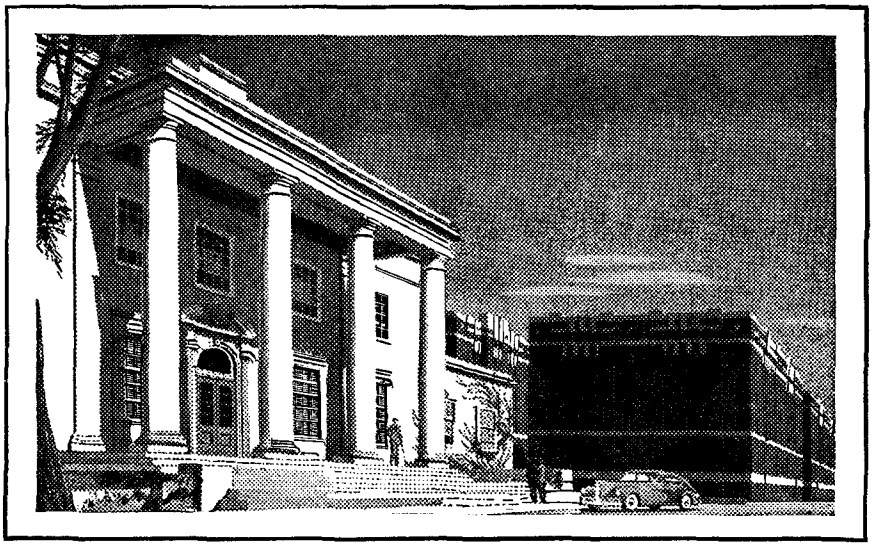

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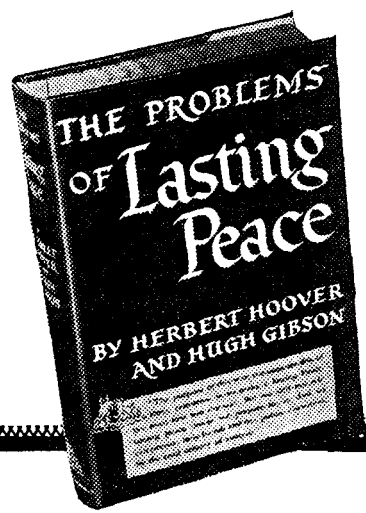

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VOLUME LV NOVEMBER, 1942 NUMBER 227

The American
MERCURY

IS OUR ARMY TOO LARGE?

By Major Alexander P. De Seversky

Early in our military mobilization effort, those who hinted at an army of four to five millions sounded extreme. But under the impact of Pearl Harbor, estimates of the projected size of our conscripted forces rocketed to seven or eight millions, and by mid-September, the director of our national selective service, Major General Lewis B. Hershey, indicated that the land army would reach from ten to thirteen million men.

In the same week that this figure was announced, and at a time when the conscript army was about four and a half millions, Paul McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission, confirmed that the shortage of labor in vital industries was growing more acute, to the point where eventual labor conscription was "inevitable." At the same time, we were warned from other directions that the shortage of farm labor threatened the United Nations war effort and civilian morale. Meanwhile, construction of certain war plants was being cancelled for lack of essential materials and Donald Nelson informed a House committee that we have "arrived at the point where if you add a thing to our program, then you have to subtract something."

These are not separate, departmentalized problems, but segments of one problem. They cannot be solved — indeed, they cannot even be understood — except in terms of the over-all question of our own and the United Nations resources in

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manpower and materials. We are rapidly being disillusioned about the great American myth of inexhaustible labor forces, raw materials and industrial skills. The wishful-thinking notion that Congress can legislate an abundance of everything for all purposes is giving way to the realization that there are dead-ends in every direction — that *appropriating* must give way to *apportioning*.

The fact that a thirteen-million figure for the Army did not evoke a gasp of consternation is proof enough that we are succumbing to the anæsthesia of numbers. "Million" has become a digit in our thinking. Few stopped to calculate the far-reaching implications. The withdrawal of thirteen million men from civilian pursuits does not mean merely a diminution of available manpower by thirteen millions. Every one of those men must be equipped with modern weapons, housed, fed and eventually transported to some arena of action across thousands of miles of ocean; then he must be supplied continually across the same distance. All of this means an immense industrial and raw-material investment.

In the days of archery, one artisan could make weapons for twenty soldiers. In Napoleon's time, every man in the ranks called for one man behind the lines to keep him armed. A century later, in World War I, it took six civilians to provide weapons for one soldier in action. In the present war, it is estimated that about eighteen civilians in agriculture and industry are needed to keep one soldier continually supplied and equipped. The selective service goal, therefore, implies labor support to the tune of 234,000,000 — nearly twice our total population, including women, children and the aged. Whether this estimate is literally correct is beside the point. There is enough truth in it to suggest the magnitude of the drain and strain involved in an army of such proportions. After all, thirteen millions represent 10 per cent of our total population, 20 per cent of our male population, probably 50 per cent of our able-bodied males of military age, even after extending the definition at both ends of the age scale.

Brigadier General Robert M. Littlejohn, chief quartermaster in the American-European theatre of war, recently told the press that the maintenance of one American soldier in Britain requires one and a half tons of shipping monthly, even in this period of lull, and despite the fact that Britain supplies one-third of the necessary food, all the

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necessary coal and a variety of other goods. Obviously, this British contribution to the pool of supplies must diminish as our forces in Europe increase. Just as obviously, the estimated tonnage per man will undergo great expansion if and when our soldiers are actively in combat, in view of the enormous consumption of materials in modern operations.

General Littlejohn also indicated that it takes over ten tons of shipping to transport an American soldier to the British Isles. Other experts have placed the figure at fifteen tons per man. Translate that into the terms of transatlantic and transpacific expeditions totalling from eight to ten millions — which allows us a reserve of three to five millions for the Western Hemisphere — and we are dealing with an aggregate shipping job of 120 to 150 million tons! This is *net* tonnage, over and above heavy losses through enemy undersea blockade.

But in this, we are reckoning only the industrial, agricultural and transport needs represented by an *American* army of that size. A realistic estimate must recognize the need to supply the British, Australian and other United Nations forces as well. With about half of Russia's industrial and food resources already wiped out by the widening Nazi conquest, the importance of priorities on American industrial and food output for that country will scarcely be argued. Britain, too, is increasingly dependent on American feeding and war goods.

Moreover, we have considered the proposed thirteen million army as if it were the whole of our armed force. The Navy is no less ambitious in its own mobilization of manpower, and perhaps with more justice, in the light of our colossal communications and transport tasks. And again, every sailor enlisted takes for granted a sizeable civilian contingent for munitions, bottoms and other supplies. The projected air forces of the various services, totalling perhaps two hundred thousand planes, of which one hundred thousand would be bombers, means involvement of some five million men in crews, ground services and continuous production.

Ten to thirteen million soldiers is a staggering total in relation to a population of 130 million under any conditions. It is even larger when seen in true relation to the production job on our hands for ourselves and our allies; and particularly in relation to the changing character of war in this age of air power.

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II

Though none of these gigantic programs has been more than started, lack of balance is already in evidence on every hand. Already the competition for men and materials is keen, as every branch of the military services and every responsible civilian administration jockeys for a larger share of these dwindling resources. Unless it is quickly and firmly headed off, the contest must become bitter and desperate. In fact, the more earnest and patriotic every individual military and civilian administrator, the more vigorously he will strive to expand and to implement his particular department of the national effort.

No one can blame Army leaders for insisting on the largest possible mass of land force, with all that this connotes in weapons, motorized equipment, auxiliary aviation. In the nature of the case, Army heads plan and act on the assumption that the war will be won or lost in hand-to-hand combat on *terra firma*. They live by the dictum that wars are won at the point of a bayonet.

The Navy Command is no less certain that the global conflict will be decided on the high seas. As a matter of fact, every enlargement of the land forces predicates an equivalent enlargement of naval forces to place these soldiers on distant shores and to keep them continually provisioned and armed. Under modern conditions, moreover, naval forces make no sense without corresponding overhead protection by aircraft. Hence, a step-up in naval strength calls for a corresponding step-up in aircraft carriers. Since carriers, in turn, are disastrously vulnerable to assault by land-based aviation, the Navy logically reaches out for its share of long-range, shore-based air power. The recent designation of Vice-Admiral John H. Towers as chief of a united command of naval air forces in the Pacific amounts to a declaration that the Navy is branching out into land-based aviation, over and above the floating aircraft integrated with the fleets. It represents another skirmish in what Colonel Hugh J. Knerr has warned against in THE AMERICAN MERCURY as a "dangerous struggle for command."

In short, every branch of the armed services, and every civilian group entrusted with vital tasks behind the lines, strives patriotically to increase its own share of the national potential. As one raises the ante, the others necessarily follow suit. What if certain

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contingents of men and production are not needed now? They may be needed in the future and must, in the view of the departmental administrator, be husbanded for that coming need. Hence, battleships which cannot be finished until 1948, additional millions of soldiers who cannot conceivably be transported and put into action until 1945 or later, mountains of equipment for tasks which cannot even be started until the skies overhead are cleared of hostile air power. Hence, the ludicrous and dangerous pyramiding of armed forces and types of production without reference to what comes first, what can be postponed, what can be kept down to a minimum. In effect, every service, in uniform or in mufti, is *hoarding* manpower and materials.

In releasing the thirteen million figure, General Hershey declared that the manpower needs of the Army must come before those of industry in general. Superficially, this would seem beyond argument. Actually, of what use is Army manpower without adequate industrial and agricultural backing? Of what use is this manpower — no matter how perfectly trained and magnificently equipped — if the seas are impassable and the skies held by the Axis?

What the situation calls for, indubitably, is a single guiding intelligence — a Supreme Command of some sort, with total authority over the total problem of planning strategy, apportioning the limited available human and material resources, and implementing the plans.

The fantastic and ultimately impossible multiplication of forces provides absolute proof that we lack a strategy for winning the war. We may have localized regional strategies, an Army plan, a Navy plan — but no centrally co-ordinated over-all strategy. Each of the services behaves as though it *alone* must win the war, using the others merely as auxiliary or supporting elements. And we have no air-power strategy at all, since America's air forces are split and subordinated to the older military entities.

The kind of military weapons and services a nation builds should provide an index to the kind of war it is gearing to fight. The astronomical figures set up as goals by all our services may consequently be accepted as an indication that America is determined to fight every variety of war simultaneously: a 1917 trench-and-bayonet war, a sea-power war, and ultimately even two air-power wars — one naval, the other land. At the

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same time, it proposes to fight an ultra-modern and streamlined technological war, expressed in the language of modern production and the most advanced weapons.

The fact that we are trying to pile up maximum amounts of everything new and old betrays the absence of expert guidance. The expert knows precisely what he needs to build his edifice, as it were, and doesn't accumulate immense amounts of every conceivable building material. It is an old and true military principle that no nation can be equally strong on land, at sea and in the air. Prodigal America may have ignored this principle in the past; it can ignore it no longer, as the cumulative shortages are proving.

To carry out in full any such concurrent preparations in all directions as we are now seeking, we would need a population of at least one billion and national resources larger than the entire world possesses.

If the proposed army of thirteen million men is to be accepted literally, it must be presumed to indicate our basic strategy. Certainly its training, equipment, transport and maintenance would leave little if any margin of manpower and natural resources for implementing any other strategies. The limited naval strength which it would permit would hardly suffice to support such land forces and the margin of men and materials that could be spared for aviation would not begin to cover Army requirements for supporting aviation, with nothing to spare for direct strategic effort in the "air ocean."

What applies to the United States applies no less to the United Nations as a whole. True co-ordination does not mean proportional representation of all allies on all fronts and in all the services. It does not mean, for instance, that every nation must contribute its pro-rated share to the total soldiery, the total air forces, the total naval forces. On the contrary, we hurt the cause of Russia and China — both of which have ample supplies of men — every time we turn an aviation mechanic or tank maker or even food raiser unnecessarily into a soldier.

The essence of co-operation is to apportion tasks among the allies in accordance with their major capacities, skills and resources. At every point, it must be decided whether a given number of Americans, Chinese, Britishers are more useful as wielders of bayonets or as workers at the bench, miners, ship-builders, farmers. The United

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Nations, like the United States, can hope to achieve their inevitable victory most quickly and economically only by bringing to bear a single and centralized intelligence.

Our allies look to America as the "arsenal of democracy." They have nowhere else to look for the things which the phrase connotes. Ours is the primary job of providing tanks, guns, motorized transport, explosives and above all — aviation. There is a point at which withdrawal of manpower for the creation of gigantic armies, and diversion of production for the support of these armies, limits the reality of such an "arsenal." In time, a more advanced point will be reached, if the process is not checked by tough-minded leadership, when the "arsenal" will be stalled altogether.

The writer does not pretend to put his finger on the precise point. He hopes only to focus attention on the central fallacy of our runaway war effort.

III

In this day and age, it is not merely proper but necessary to raise the question of how large an army a country requires for its actual fighting needs. The science of war-making has long passed the stage where sheer weight of flesh and muscle decides the outcome.

The swift disintegration of the magnificent French armies under the pressure of Hitler's superior mechanized strength tells a story. So do the cumulative Russian disasters, despite the country's almost inexhaustible manpower and heroic morale. Neither can we ignore the fact that the most decisive single engagement of the war to date, the Battle of Britain, was fought and won by a handful of British airmen, while great armies on both sides and a great Navy on the British side, were wholly immobilized and reduced to the status of impotent onlookers. Crete was conquered by a navyless enemy in the face of immense naval forces massed for the defense. In the Battle of Midway, to cite a more recent example, a formidable naval and carrier force sought the offensive against a tiny island, only to be smashed by a handful of airplanes.

If there is one thing that this war has proven beyond doubt it is that the decision will not be scored by sheer volume of men and metal but by superior weapons and superior strategy. Whenever we sacrifice quality for bulk, brainpower for manpower, we are playing into the hands of the enemy. In

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the final analysis, America's principal assets are its natural resources and productive genius. Insofar as we weaken or handicap these assets, we are unwittingly undermining our own strength.

The implication that this is still an old-style, trench-and-bayonet war simply doesn't jibe with elementary truths obvious to any lay observer. The most diehard of old-line strategists no longer contends that armies can operate under skies dominated by the enemy; he thus admits in effect that conquest of the skies must come *first*. By this time, it is clear that air power can function over surface areas held firmly by the enemy, whereas surface forces cannot hope to function if the enemy holds the skies.

The only question orthodox militarists still raise is whether such air operations can be "decisive." They therefore concede, at least, that the seizure of the air is an indispensable first step. Under these conditions, common sense dictates that our industrial potential for air power should not be sacrificed to surface weapons — that where expansion of land forces threatens the production, the manning and the maintenance of true air power, the latter must be given unequivocal primacy.

Those of us who have advocated the creation of genuine and peerless air power for America are sometimes accused of wishing to fight today's war with tomorrow's weapons. Actually, of course, nations which do not constantly seek tomorrow's, end by using *yesterday's* weapons. But let that pass. Consider, instead, the leaders who pin their faith on gigantic surface forces, on armies and navies which cannot be brought into action until we take command of the air above. Are they not holding back the supreme weapon of this day in the interests of forces which cannot be brought into play until the day after tomorrow? Are they not acting on habit rather than reason in putting nearly all their eggs in the basket of bayonet strategy, just because it was done that way in the past?

If our primary job were to fight a continental war in North America, against Canada or Mexico, the emphasis on armies might be logically explained. That was the kind of war Hitler geared for. The German army in this war has averaged 10 per cent of Greater Germany's population of eighty million. To offset this serious drain, however, Hitler has been able to draw millions of men and women for industrial purposes from the conquered nations. In addition,

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he has shuttled millions of his soldiers between factory and battle front, returning them to productive usefulness after basic military training and during periods when there was a lull in fighting.

The immobilization of so large a percentage by the United States is not justified by analysis of our special geographical position and the special contribution to the common task demanded from us by the technological picture of the United Nations. We are separated from the battle arenas by great oceans. We cannot hope to transport multimillioned armies and to keep them supplied without first eliminating Axis air power and undersea blockade. We cannot hope to place such armies in Europe and Africa or to deploy them through the myriad islands of the Pacific without first counting out enemy air power. Are we not remiss in our obligation to the general cause if we weaken our effectiveness as an arsenal for the United Nations?

We will win this war by superior industrial output and superior weapons. The better the weapon, the smaller the investment of human life. Whatever tends to hamstring our industrial output is of direct assistance to the Axis. Our first obligation is to enhance the destructive power of every man in the United Nations lineup, and not merely to expand the numbers of those men.

America needs a powerful army and a powerful navy. No one in his senses argues to the contrary. But since unlimited strength on land, on sea and in the air is physically impossible, audacious decisions must be made. An integrated strategy must be developed, wherein the relative importance of every element is established — not its relative importance in the final stages of the war or in the tasks of pacification after the war, but now, in the winning of the war. First things must come first.

Our orators and leaders have defined this as a technological war. They point out that the democracies count on our technological potential to swing the balance. Let's have the intellectual and moral courage of our convictions in this respect, instead of piling up reserves of military manpower beyond our capacity to transport them or to shield them from above, and at the expense of that very technological potential.

By this time, most Americans are well aware of the primacy of air power. We must work up the courage to act upon this awareness, to curb expansion in directions that

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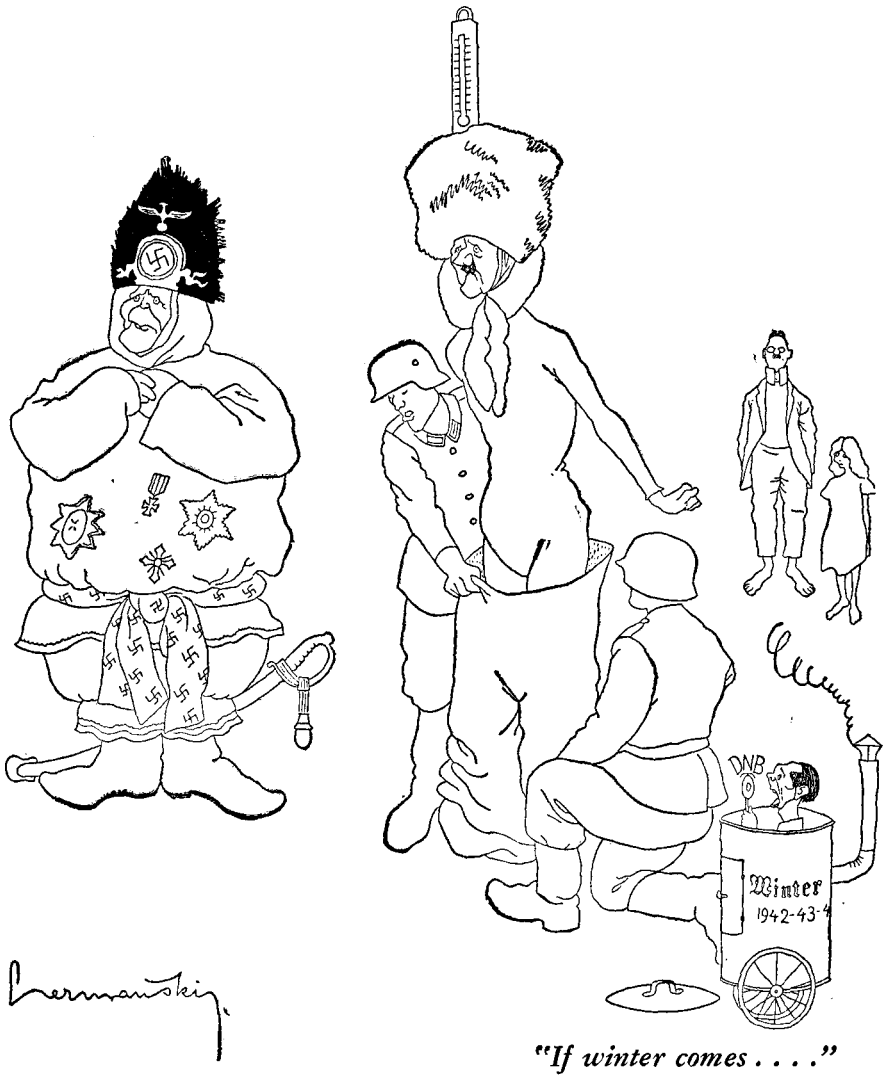
imply the old mile-by-mile surface procedures. Once we escape the obsession of numbers, we shall proceed more intelligently to make American warriors super-men by giving them super-weapons.



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▶ *With all its faults, it is the citadel of our freedom.*

IN DEFENSE OF CONGRESS

By Charles A. Beard

From all sides, editors, columnists, commentators and political spokesmen have been pouring streams of bitter and despairing criticism upon the Congress of the United States. Few of them, unhappily, have shown any awareness of the implications of such criticism concentrated on a basic democratic institution. Even fewer have realized that derogation of the legislative branch of our government is not a peculiarly American fact but in line with a world-wide decline of representative government, manifest in places as far apart as Japan and Yugoslavia, Brazil and France.

Judging by press comment last spring on the proposal that Senators and Representatives should have gasoline for travel to and from the Capitol, members of Congress are useless creatures, have no grave public duties to discharge, and might as well shut up shop. A village politician who wanted to run for lieutenant governor was entitled to gas for campaigning around his state, but a Senator or Representative already elected was not worth a thought, save for disparagement. As the bright boys on *Time* phrased the press indictment: "A contemptuous laugh went up from the nation. This time it was X-cards for Congressmen." Contemptuous laughter for the body to which the Constitution of the United States entrusts all legislative powers vested in the national government! The general indifference to this situation is perhaps its most alarming aspect.

In his syndicated column about the same time, Raymond Clapper pronounced a virtual death-sentence on Congress:

> Congress has remained a collection of two-cent politicians who could serve well enough in simpler days. But the ignorance and provincialism of Congress renders it incapable of meeting the needs of modern government. . . . People don't give a damn what the average Senator or Congressman says. The reason they don't care is that they know what you hear in Congress is 99 per cent tripe, ignorance and demagoguery and not to be relied on . . .

If such statements are true, then representative government is dead in the United States and merely

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waits the kind of funeral that Hitler provided for the German Reichstag. And more ominous still, the people of the United States, who elect these Senators and Representatives, are incapable of self-government. In that case, what have we to look forward to except one-man tyranny of some variety?

Fortunately, the wholesale indictment of Congress is unjustified. In my judgment, it is not true to the facts of history. It is one-sided, undiscriminating, and reckless. The indictment betrays a profound misconception of the work actually done by Congress. It lacks all constructive vision. And more: the promulgation and reiteration of such criticisms, so unqualified in nature, shake public confidence in constitutional government — one thing certainly worth fighting for in this age of self-imposed slavery and tyranny by conquest.

Is it true that there has been a decline in the intelligence and character of Senators and Representatives, as compared with members of Congress in earlier times, or with members of the executive department, or with leaders in affairs among citizens at large? If Congress has fallen to such a low estate in fact and in public esteem, how are we to account for it? Granting that the estate of Congress leaves much to be desired, how can that estate be improved? These are the questions to which critical editors, columnists and commentators should be directing their attention, instead of consulting their fleeting emotions. Our task is to restore representative government to its fullest prestige and usefulness, thus making democracy truly effective, rather than to attack its primary institutions.

In their efforts to appear wise, critics of Congress often refer to the great of old — to orators like Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, and Henry Clay — and assert that, in comparison, members of Congress today are of small caliber. It is true that no member now can, or chooses to, deliver orations in the grand manner. But is that proof of a decline in intelligence and character? In my opinion, it is nothing of the sort. It is pertinent to note that, in spite of their oratory, these mighty men of old could not resolve the sectional issue of their time and let the nation drift into a civil war. However, that is a detail. The truth is that oratory of the grand style, whatever its merits, if any, is no longer appropriate to or useful in the discussion of the complicated questions of our day, which call for highly specialized knowledge and less rhetoric.

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As a more than casual student of the *Congressional Record*, I venture this opinion: It is possible to pick out of the *Record* for the past ten years addresses (not orations) which, for breadth of knowledge, technical skill, analytical acumen, close reasoning and dignified presentation, compare favorably with similar utterances made in the preceding century by the so-called great orators. Sweeping as this statement appears to be, I make the assertion and invite those who have recently been preaching the contrary to assume the burden of proving their contentions.

Considering the complexity of problems before Congress today, and taking account of the distractions which now beset Senators and Representatives, the quality of serious speeches in both houses is amazingly high. There is, to be sure, more trash — bad poetry, demagogic clap-trap, and clotted nonsense — in the *Record* of the past ten years than there was in the *Annals of Congress* from 1789 to 1799. Yet, after studying the operations of the first Congresses of the United States and the operations of the seventy-sixth Congress, I am convinced that for disinterestedness, absence of corruption, and concern with the public good, the present body is of a higher order. If any reader wishes to form his own opinion, let him look at the sixth chapter in my *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy*, and then examine the proceedings and history of the seventy-sixth Congress.

Now let us compare knowledge and character in the present Congress with knowledge and character in the executive department. An opinion is abroad to the effect that members of the executive department *know* more about the government of the United States and its problems than do any Senators and Representatives. The opinion, I am convinced, is not well founded. I believe that it is possible to choose ten or fifteen members of Congress — members of long service — who know as much if not more about the government of the United States and its problems than ten or fifteen of the members of the executive department standing highest on the list of quality. At all events, it is incumbent on anyone who treats Congress as an aggregation of ignoramuses to make such a comparison and to state the grounds on which he places the executive department higher than the legislative department in this respect.

Character is more difficult to measure — impossible, in any exact terms. But it is pertinent to

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point out that the great scandals which have rocked the country during the past fifty years have all occurred in the executive department. There have been some sad offenses in Congress and they should not be glossed over. They have, however, been minor in size; and it has been to Congressional committees that the country has owed the exposures of malfeasance in administration — of the Harding régime, to cite one instance out of many that come to mind.

II

If such contentions rest on just grounds, how then are we to account for the current depreciation of Congress? Happy, it was said long ago, are they who know the causes of things; I do not pretend to be able to answer the question. Yet, I feel sure that the responsibility for this depreciation does not all lie at the door of Congress. The press and the radio, it seems to me, deserve a large share of it and so do thoughtless members of the general public.

For a long time — roughly speaking, until about the close of the Civil War — great newspapers and at least a few magazines gave serious attention to the proceedings of Congress. In those days, it was the custom for metropolitan newspapers to report Congressional debates extensively, analytically, and in a dignified manner worthy of the gravity of public business. For more than fifty years this practice has not been followed. In what newspaper of the United States or magazine of general circulation is it now possible to find from day to day or week to week comprehensive and balanced reports of Congressional proceedings? In no newspaper or magazine of general circulation. This is no longer "news."

When some very exciting issue is being debated in the House or Senate, extracts from or summaries of a few speeches will appear in the columns of the largest newspapers. The same is true of Congressional hearings. As a rule, such reports are sketchy at best. But let some demagogue indulge in antics on the floor of either house, let some personal quarrel flare up, let the chairman of a Congressional committee bare a scandal at a hearing or hold up a business man or railway magnate to scorn, and Congress makes the first pages.

What is the effect on the American people? After one has been subjected to a drum-fire of this kind for five, ten, or twenty years, one must be a kind of superman not

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to arrive at the settled conviction that Congress deserves contempt. Those who are throwing stones at Congress should consider their own words and conduct.

In any apportionment of the blame for the prevailing low opinion respecting Congress, I am inclined to place a heavy responsibility on the Gallup polls. Nothing, in my view, could be more preposterous than asking Tom, Dick, Susan and Harriet in the highways and byways what they think the government should do and then reporting their answers as representing "the opinion of the people." This is a kind of referendum — the most irresponsible kind, in that the formation of the questions and the making of the record are in private hands. In any case, it is absurd for people who do not have to assume any responsibility for executing the laws or actions they demand, to tell Senators and Representatives just what to do; it is also dangerous, for it holds a constant threat over members of Congress and distracts their attention from public business to the alarms of poll tumults. Some of the world's worst tyrants have been approved by popular polls: Napoleon I, Napoleon II, and Hitler, for example.

Another tendency of thinking in certain quarters helps to account for the current disesteem of Congress. I refer to the rise and growth of the cult of presidential leadership. It was hinted at in 1885 by Woodrow Wilson's *Congressional Government*. It was expounded in his *Constitutional Government* in 1908. It was preached by Theodore Roosevelt. In the New York *Times* Magazine of March 2, 1941, Professor Henry Steele Commager elaborated it and gave it fulsome praise. "Democracy," Professor Commager declared, "apparently flourishes when the Executive is strong, languishes when it is weak." That Congress has critical functions to perform, he conceded, but no great inventive or constructive leadership is to be expected from that source.

Writers on American history and government are to blame for a part of the public indifference to, and misunderstanding of Congress. We have thousands of biographies of men who passed from obscurity to oblivion, but not a single great and comprehensive history of Congress and Congressional procedure. "Battles" in Congress crowd the pages of our written histories. The history of the Congressional system remains unwritten. In these days, professors of government in our universities write big books on administration, political parties and

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the presidency for the instruction of youth and the general public. Legislative organization and procedure and the place of Congress in our constitutional system are neglected. In fact, it is not too much to say that this subject is the dark continent of American research and constructive thinking. Only recently has the American Political Science Association created a special committee to study Congress and the curve of its fortunes.

No small part of the weakness ascribed to Congress and displayed by it is the fault of Congress itself. It has stubbornly continued organizational forms and methods adapted to an age of handicrafts and small farms but today utterly inadequate for a complete discharge of its constitutional duties. That is where the problem must be tackled, with a view to modernizing and fortifying the operation of our highest legislative body. That is where criticism is justified, constructive and necessary.

Congress insists on surrendering its essential legislative prerogatives to a loose aggregation of standing committees which has remained substantially unchanged since Jefferson's time, except for an increase in number.

It abandoned long ago the form of procedure best adapted to the concentration of talents and thought on fundamental problems of government; that is, genuine committee-of-the-whole procedure on the primary questions of national interest arising at each session.

Besides surrendering to the dictates of committees, it wastes days and weeks of each session on petty business unworthy of a village council — trifling matters which it refuses to delegate to responsible agents, even while conferring immense powers over life and property to administrative officers.

It has failed to provide itself with a technical staff competent to deal with the complicated problems of public business.

It has refused to regularize and institutionalize its necessary and proper relations to the Executive, preferring, instead, underground operations in both directions.

It has allowed individual members, endowed with large powers, to make roving investigations without regard to private rights, and permitted them to consume endless hours with prolix and absurd speeches wholly irrelevant to the public business in hand.

It has spent time, energy and money investigating every conceivable subject of national concern — but it has never made a thorough inquiry into its own rec-

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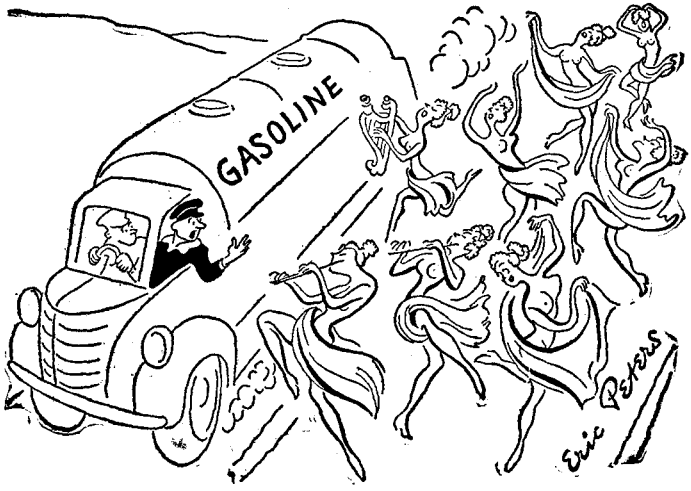
ord, into its own weaknesses, and into ways and means of bringing its own organization and procedure into line with modern needs and of raising its standing and competence as a principal branch of national government.

It is, in my opinion, criticism of this kind that we need in Congress and outside, not indiscriminate abuse. The faults of our Congress are, in the last analysis, *our* faults. We cannot kill off Congress without committing suicide as a democratic nation. We cannot hamstring Congress without hamstringing our own American civilization. American talents should be concentrated on the problem of maintaining and improving constitutional government in America — the most precious institution of liberty, the most certain bulwark against servitude, that we as a people possess.



"It's no use, ladies . . . we gotta have vouchers for every drop."

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THE AMERICAN PLAN FOR A REORGANIZED WORLD

By Kingsbury Smith

Behind the scenes in Washington, a new world is being planned for you. If the plans materialize, you are going to be given a try at running the world. You are going to try to make it a better world and keep it so. If you think that defeating the Axis is the chief aim of the Government's foreign policy, you are going to get a surprise. Smashing the Axis is only the beginning. American leadership in world affairs, looking towards a pacific and prosperous epoch, is the ultimate goal of those in Washington who are endeavoring to design the shape of things to come.

Uncle Sam is going to help police the world. He is going to feed, house and clothe great areas of the world. He hopes to have the British, the Russians and the Chinese as fellow cops, but if they fall asleep on the beat, Uncle Sam is going to swing the night stick alone. The Administration's post-war planners are convinced that the only way to maintain peace permanently in the world is to be prepared to enforce it. While there is need for policemen in every town and city to enforce peace among the so-called highly civilized peoples of the world, there will exist the danger of international gangsterism. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this conflict will be the last world war. The bold intention is to prevent any future Hitler-led nation from becoming strong enough to start another such war, while unleashing the creative and productive energies of all nations.

Maintaining world peace, however, is not the only aim of the Washington post-war planners. Establishment of a better economic and social, as well as political, world order is the main objective. You are going to pay a high price in taxation and in your standard of living for the experiment of attempting to make this a better world in which to live, but the planners believe that you will find it worth while; that you will find it less costly than the disturbance of a world war every twenty years.

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They also believe that eventually it will bring you lasting prosperity.

The plans which are being made in Washington, chiefly by the Department of State, rest on this basic idea: that the anti-Axis countries which are now bound together under the name of United Nations shall form the organization of a Better World Order. This association of United Nations will have two main objectives:

1. To maintain real world peace through the compulsory disarmament of the Axis powers and the policing of the world, chiefly by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China.
2. To make membership in the association so beneficial that no nation can afford to remain outside.

The economic benefits it is planned to offer the other nations will include:

1. A system of open trade among the member nations, guaranteeing non-discrimination in commercial relations.
2. A fair distribution to all member nations of sufficient raw materials to meet their reasonable peacetime needs.
3. American financial assistance for essential enterprises, such as public works programs, in those countries which do not possess the capital for such development.
4. Strict regulation of the supply of commodities among member nations so as to protect the interests of consumer countries and their peoples.
5. A co-operative movement for the rapid expansion of trade among the member nations. This movement is to be based on a system of financial relations so devised that materials can be produced and ways found of moving them where markets are created by human needs, as in China and India.

In the sphere of political security, the United States will agree to assist those member states which are engaged in forcible resistance to unprovoked aggression. All other member states will be pledged to do likewise.

In return for these benefits, the member states will be called upon to fulfill the following conditions:

1. Guarantee certain fundamental human rights to their citizens, such as freedom of speech and religion, freedom from terror, and freedom from want.
2. Solemnly promise to settle all international disputes by peaceful methods of arbitration, submitting such disputes to an international court of justice when direct negotiation fails.
3. Agree to a drastic limitation of armaments under strict international control.

Any nation which refuses to fulfill these conditions and which, at any time in the future, threatens a member state with aggression will be subjected to an immediate and effective economic boycott by the United Nations. The outlaw nation will be denied access to raw materials and its exports will be subjected to trade discrimination within the association. Behind the economic boycott will stand the power of Anglo-American naval

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and aerial might, and, it is hoped, the Russian Army and Air Force, to resist any future attempt at world domination by one or more powers.

For this better world order idea to be successful, it is recognized, it must be extended to include the vanquished as well as the victor nations of this war. In order to secure the co-operation, and eventually the support, of the defeated Axis countries, it is felt there must be a long armistice period during which armies of occupation will maintain law and order in the vanquished nations. It is intended that the armistice shall last a minimum of three years, and possibly five. In addition to enabling the United Nations to accomplish their immediate post-war objectives, this prolonged transition from war to peace also is expected to be a "cooling-off period" for the passions and hatreds of conflict on both sides.

The post-war planners believe one of the great mistakes of the victor nations in the first world war was to permit statesmen and military leaders who had led the fight against Germany and the Central Powers to write the peace while they were still literally in the heat of battle. Those whose minds have been concentrated on the destruction of the enemy can hardly be expected to write a sane peace at the moment of their triumph. Likewise, it is felt there is equal reason for permitting time to heal the burning wound of defeat in the losing countries before offering them final peace terms. The danger of revolutionary or revenge movements in the beaten nations must pass and their peoples must be convinced of the good intentions of the United Nations before the armies of occupation can be withdrawn.

The immediate objectives to be achieved after the cessation of hostilities and during the armistice period are to:

1. Disarm Germany, Italy, Japan and their satellites completely.
2. Prevent revolution from developing in the defeated countries.
3. Arrange swift relief measures for the devastated war areas in all countries, including food and clothing for the people.
4. Avoid the demobilization of the armies until provisions have been made for their return to peaceful employment.
5. Make sure the cessation of hostilities will not be followed by a continuation of economic warfare.
6. Assist in the establishment of trustworthy, liberal governments in the defeated countries which will maintain law and order and agree to co-operate with the United Nations in the establishment of the better world order.

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II

In disarming the Axis powers, it is intended to deprive them of all offensive weapons of warfare and all means of producing or obtaining such weapons, secretly or otherwise. No promises will be given them that they shall ever again be permitted to have equality of armaments with the United States, Great Britain, or any of the other United Nations. In starting two world wars, Germany has forfeited the right to equality of armaments. Japan is a half-savage urchin in the family of nations, too immature in the ways of civilization to be trusted with the dangerous weapons of modern warfare for many years to come.

During the armistice period, the defeated nations will be permitted to retain police forces only and their weapons will be limited solely to small arms. Strict international control will be maintained to see that the police forces are not developed into shock troops or SS men by revengeful ex-generals or political racketeers of the vanquished countries. One of the chief functions of the armies of occupation will be to prevent military or political cliques from organizing revenge movements, underground or otherwise.

Through the liberal distribution of food and clothing in the Axis countries, and the rapid rehabilitation of the war-wrecked areas, it is hoped to avoid chaos and to win over the common people of Germany, Japan and Italy to the better world order. The plan is not merely to hand out a dole to them, but to offer them relief in return for active co-operation in the BWO effort. Those who receive American food and clothing in Germany, for instance, will, after the initial stages of relief, be obliged to work for it if they are physically able to do so. The methods of distributing relief, and the terms under which it will be distributed, are considered of the utmost importance by the American planners. Since the United States will be called upon to carry the greatest share of this relief burden, the planners are determined that this country shall play a leading rôle in determining those methods and terms.

Prior to America's entry into the war, the British had assumed the leadership in these post-war relief plans. A committee was established in London under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Leith-Ross to study the problems of post-war relief in the conquered countries of Europe. Although the United

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States assigned an observer to this committee, it was chiefly a British organization. After the United States entered the war and it became more apparent than ever that this country would be obliged to shoulder the major responsibility of post-war relief, Secretary of State Hull decided that an organization of wider scope should be established in Washington. He sent his economic adviser, Herbert Feis, to London to talk the British, and Leith-Ross especially, into acceptance of his proposal. Feis had to do a lot of talking. Finally, he succeeded in bringing Sir Frederick back to Washington, where Hull is now proceeding to organize a United Nations Post-War Relief Committee.

One of the primary armistice terms to be imposed upon the vanquished countries is that their military forces shall be disarmed but not immediately demobilized. A defeated nation's discharged soldiers on the loose are ripe for trouble. Under the control of the United Nations' occupation forces, it is intended that the defeated armies shall be kept in orderly groups, subject to discipline, and put to work on rehabilitation projects in their own countries until arrangements are provided for their gradual return to peacetime employment.

There is also to be parallel action in the victor as well as the vanquished nations for the gradual demobilization of the armed forces. The BWO planners don't want to see our own boys brought back home after the war and discharged by the thousands before jobs have been made available for them. The demobilization of the armed forces of all the nations must be on a gradual scale, corresponding with the transfer of each country's internal economy from a war to a peacetime basis. In order to prevent the continuation of economic warfare after the cessation of hostilities, an understanding will be sought among the United Nations concerning the joint line of policy to be followed by them in their trade relations with the defeated nations. We don't want the United Nations to start underselling in an effort to grab markets in the vanquished countries.

In assisting the establishment of trustworthy, liberal governments in the defeated Axis countries, it is not the intention of the American planners to insist upon adoption by the peoples of those nations of our form of democracy as a prerequisite to membership in the BWO association of nations. We are not going to try to force democracy down the throats of the defeated peoples as

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part of the armistice terms. The State Department planners are more realistic than that. In the first place, there is too much difference of opinion in the world as to what constitutes democracy. Soviet Russia considers herself a democracy. She is not in the sense that we understand that doctrine. Nevertheless, Russia's co-operation in the post-war world is essential to the success of the BWO plan.

Likewise, it is felt that there are many peoples in the world who are not yet sufficiently advanced in popular government to carry out the responsiblities of successful democracy. This applies not only to Japan, and to India, with its extreme religious and caste differences, but even to Germany, where, some of our leading officials now feel, a great campaign of educational enlightenment will be necessary to erase the stamp of Hitlerism from the mind of the German people before they are prepared for as much political freedom as true democracy implies.

Therefore, it is intended to accept the co-operation of governments of non-democratic countries, provided they prove themselves over a reasonable period of time to be trustworthy, capable of maintaining a decent and orderly way of life and sincerely willing to co-operate in the better world order. As Secretary of State Hull has said, the United Nations must, in the process of re-establishing international order, "exercise surveillance over aggressor nations until such time as the latter demonstrate their willingness and ability to live at peace with other nations."

How long such surveillance will need to continue depends upon the rapidity with which the peoples of Germany, Japan and Italy and their satellites give convincing proof that they have repudiated and abandoned "the monstrous philosophy of superior race and conquest by force, and have embraced loyally the basic principles of peaceful processes." Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles thinks it will take a minimum of three years to test the goodwill of the Axis peoples to become rational and loyal members of the family of nations. Other officials in Washington think it will take five and perhaps ten years before the period of probation can be terminated.

III

The Department of State is the chief agency of the Government in Washington which is engaged in studying and drafting the peace plans. A special departmental com-

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mittee meets frequently to discuss the plans and exchange information on individual studies and reports. The leading planners on this committee are Hull, Welles, Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Dr. Herbert Feis, Economic Adviser to the State Department, and Leo Pasvolsky, Special Assistant to the Secretary. Norman Davis, chairman of the American Red Cross and former American Ambassador-at-large to disarmament and other international conferences, attends the committee meetings from time to time. A native of Hull's own State of Tennessee, Davis is a close personal friend and adviser to the Secretary. Berle, one of the original brain trusters, is a leading policy maker in the Department, and handles the political aspects of the post-war plans. Acheson is in charge of the lend-lease program, while Feis and Pasvolsky deal chiefly with the economic problems. Other agencies of the Government, such as the Treasury and the Department of Commerce, also are engaged in various aspects of the peace planning, but the State Department remains the center of these activities.

Some of the more ambitious visionaries of Vice President Wallace's Board of Economic Warfare sought for a while to assume a leading rôle in the formulation of post-war plans. They wanted to dictate the terms under which American lend-lease aid should be extended to our allies and other friendly nations. They favored a more direct and blunt method of establishing the better world order than Hull and his associates consider practical. They wanted to compel rather than persuade the rest of the world to accept the American way of life. Hull finally went to bat at the White House over the entire issue of who was to handle America's foreign affairs. He won. The President issued an executive order making it unmistakably clear that the Department of State remained the policy-making branch of the government in respect to our relations with foreign powers.

Planning for peace is proving no easy task for Cordell Hull and his associates in the Department of State. A "let's-win-the-war-first" attitude exists both here and among our allies abroad. In the case of the American people, this attitude is widespread. It constitutes an almost complete indifference toward post-war plans. In the case of some of our leading allies, especially Great Britain, it seems deliberate

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policy to avoid definite post-war commitments. The reluctance of some of these allies to discuss in specific terms the solution of post-war problems does not augur well for the spirit of co-operation that should prevail at the peace conference.

However, the indifference of the American people toward post-war planning is a cause for graver concern than the reluctance of our allies to discuss those plans. Sumner Welles and other high Administration officials have publicly warned that winning the peace is going to be almost as difficult as winning the war. Unless American public opinion stands overwhelmingly behind the Government in its international post-war plans, we shall lose the peace this time as we lost it the last time, they have stated.

If we are to win the peace, Hull and his associates believe, not only must the plans be made now, but all possible groundwork must be laid now. The better order they envisage will involve both economic and political sacrifices by some of our allies, particularly Great Britain and the Netherlands. Economically, for instance, it will mean the end of the pre-war British and Dutch monopoly over certain raw materials, such as rubber and tin, and the abandonment of Empire preferential tariffs. Politically, it will mean independence for India, the return of Hong Kong to China, a greater measure of home rule for the Dutch East Indies. It will mean, too, international — which is to say United Nations — control of such vital points as Singapore, the Suez Canal, Gibraltar.

The Washington planners realize that it will be easier to persuade our allies to agree to sacrifices of this character while the war is under way than it will be after the victory has been achieved. While the United Nations remain dependent upon the United States for continued existence and restoration of independence, their governments can be expected to accept the American peace program more readily than after the immediate threat to their survival has been removed by defeat of the Axis.

If the better world order is to have a chance of success, the State Department planners believe it must start functioning the moment hostilities cease. There must not be the slightest let-up in the techniques of collaboration for common purposes developed under the pressures of war. The danger of a sudden and serious slackening in co-operation, it is felt, can be overcome only by agreeing on peace-

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time procedures well in advance and actually putting them into effect to every possible extent while the war is still going on. The entire program rests on the assumption that a better world order of this sort can be established only if the United States assumes leadership; it alone will possess the strength, resources and influence necessary for such leadership.

IV

In the belief that the American people will be willing this time to lead the way in making the world a saner place to live in, the State Department planners are plodding on with the formulation of the peace plans. Apart from the general principles proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Declaration, the most important step so far achieved by the American Government is the conclusion of the so-called Master Lend-Lease Agreements with our allies. Master Lend-Lease Agreement is a misnomer for these pacts. It fails to signify either their importance or their ultimate purpose. They go far beyond the extension of lend-lease aid to our allies. They are, in reality, mutual aid and economic pacts — not merely for the duration of the war, but for all time.

In the political sphere, they pledge mutual aid against aggression. Under the terms of the agreements, the American Government has declared that the defense against aggression of Great Britain, Soviet Russia, China and the other allies is vital to the defense of this country. In return, Britain, Russia and the others promise to continue to "contribute to the defense of the United States of America" and to provide such aid as they are "in a position to supply." The pledge is not limited merely to this war. It is indefinite. The agreements have no time limit. They remain in force "until a date to be agreed upon" by the contracting parties. Thus is established the basis for permanent co-operation among the United Nations to suppress war in the future through joint action against aggression.

The pledge of economic co-operation embodied in the agreements is of equally momentous importance. In return for American aid in this war, the other United Nations agree to accept Cordell Hull's liberal trade principles as the basis for a post-war international economic system. They promise that the "final terms" of settlement for the aid they have received from this country shall include "provision for agreed action" between

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them and the United States for:

1. The expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment and the exchange and consumption of goods.
2. The elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce.
3. The reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers.
4. The attainment of the economic objectives set forth in the Atlantic Charter, including equal access by all States, "great or small, victor or vanquished," to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.

Our allies further agree that they will discuss with us, "at an early convenient date," the "best means" of attaining these economic objectives. Thus, the way is clear for the development of the economic aspect of the peace plans while the war is still under way.

The promises made by the allies in respect to Hull's economic policies are not as definite as he would like to see them. They still leave much to be accomplished. The language used is especially vague in regard to the question of when the policies shall be made effective. There is no unconditional pledge to put the policies into effect as soon as the war ends. The allies merely promise that the "final terms" of settlement with this country shall include "provision for agreed action" to make the policies effective. No exact date is set for when that final settlement shall be made, nor when the American economic policies shall be put into effect. These are the specific details which remain to be worked out during the war, and on which we have yet to obtain the agreement of our allies.

Although the promises already secured from the allies in the Master Lend-Lease Agreements do not go beyond the acceptance of principles, they represent, nevertheless, a genuine accomplishment. It is the first time, for instance, that Great Britain has gone so far even "in principle." It is not generally realized that under the terms of the pact, signed with us on February 23 of this year, the British Government agrees, in effect, to abandon the Ottawa Trade Agreements after the war. These are the agreements that guarantee preferential trade treatment to members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and represent the basis for the economic solidarity of the Empire.

In the Lend-Lease Agreement, the British Government has gone considerably further than Winston Churchill went in the Atlantic Charter. In that historic declaration of policy, Churchill made an important reservation in connec-

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tion with Britain's willingness to "further the enjoyment by all states" of equal access to trade. That reservation was: "With due respect for existing obligations." Those six words nullified the practical effect of the declaration insofar as Hull's economic policies were concerned. In the Master Lend-Lease Agreement, the British have finally decided, in effect, to relinquish the Ottawa arrangement after the war, committing themselves to the "elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce." It took months of negotiation, and the submission of five different drafts, before we persuaded the British to make this and other concessions. One of Australia's leading statesmen told the writer that the concessions were obtained only with the help of Australian pressure on London.

V

One of the strongest arguments our officials have in seeking acceptance of such American peace plans is that they not only are intended to benefit the world generally, but that by accepting them, the allies will cancel out indebtedness to us for the aid we have rendered them during this war. That is the only price we are asking for our aid — aid which, in terms of lend-lease, already has reached the rate of eight billion dollars a year. Our allies, especially Great Britain, China and Russia, feel that we owe them a great deal for having held the front lines while we got prepared for war. We have agreed to take these "intangible" benefits into consideration in the "final settlement."

At the same time, this "moral" indebtedness is offset by the fact that were it not for our aid, Great Britain would not have been able to hold out, and neither Britain, China nor Russia would be able to hope for the eventual defeat of the Axis. Nor would the Netherlands, Norway, Greece, Yugoslavia and the other conquered countries be able to hope for the restoration of their independence. Nor can it be denied that Japan's attack on us was precipitated by our aid to China and Great Britain, and our determination to help bring about the defeat of the Axis. It also is true that our allies are now giving us lend-lease aid through services and facilities to our fighting forces abroad, but this represents a very small amount compared with the aid we have rendered and will render them before this war is over. Therefore, our planners believe the

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balance sheet will still be high in our favor when the war ends.

We are keeping a dollar-and-cents credit sheet of all the aid we send our allies. The value of every plane we give to China, every shipload of materials dispatched to Britain, every tank we send to Russia, is marked down. But we do not expect full repayment in dollars or in goods. We know that the attempt to enforce payment of huge reparations and debts the last time led to dislocation of the entire world monetary system, and to the repudiation of solemn obligations by debtor governments. What is more, if we insisted on money, our allies at the end of the war would scarcely be in a position to provide it and a huge mortgage on their future would make more problems than it would conceivably solve.

We have said in the Atlantic Charter that we want no territorial aggrandizement out of this war, therefore we cannot take the land of our allies, or our enemies, in payment. Nor do we want repayment in dollars and cents. What then do we want? What can we expect?

Those who are making the peace plans believe the American people want a better world order — a world in which they can live fully and enjoy lasting peace. Co-operation that will make possible the establishment and maintenance of an orderly world is the price that we are asking the allies in return for the moral and material obligations that will be due us when ultimate victory has been achieved.

To those nations that are willing to co-operate with us in building a new world, we are prepared to continue extending lend-lease aid after the war. Yes, when you have bought enough war bonds to win the war, you will be asked to buy peace bonds to win the peace. You will be told that the needs of peace should be no less compelling than those of war. You will have rationed goods and price ceilings for a long time to come. You will be asked to help police the world indefinitely; to rehabilitate great areas of the world. The reward held out to you will be a promise of lasting peace; a promise that the entire youth of the nation will not be called upon to shed its blood every other decade; and a promise that your children and your children's children will have a finer world in which to live. The promise will be in the nature of an experiment — the American experiment in establishing a sane society of mankind.

These are the plans your Government has in mind.

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▶ *Addicts to this art are much alike, at $4.40 or 40 cents.*

MY BURLESQUE CUSTOMERS

By Gypsy Rose Lee

When people ask me about the difference between the carriage trade audience and the regular burlesque audience, I have no answer. To me, all audiences are alike. I have played to vaudeville audiences, saloon audiences, World's Fair audiences, and $4.40 audiences. There are no real differences that I can see. Of course, I have never played Hedda Gabler for a Theatre Guild crowd and there may be an entire world of people I haven't yet discovered. Perhaps if I learned Camille, or a unicycle act, I would find it.

But I'm not interested. I'm completely satisfied with my customers; I like recognizing the ones who come back week after week to see the same performance. At present, I'm playing in an uptown, top-price house. A few years ago, I did much the same act downtown in the old Irving Place Theatre, off Fourteenth Street. Both audiences seem remarkably similar — it may be that my particular talents draw the same kind of customers regardless of the price of admission.

In the old days, for instance, I discovered that on Mondays a short, stocky man with very little hair would sit in the third row on the aisle. He was there every Monday and always occupied the same seat. He never smiled or nodded to me, but I knew he appreciated the fact that all the actors had learned to look for him. Occasionally, he'd be a few minutes late. I could see him loitering in the back of the theatre and I knew he timed his entrance purposely. He liked the little buzz of the chorus girls, giggling and nudging one another as he sauntered down the aisle. With great dignity, he would seat himself and, after adjusting his coat and placing his hat under the seat, he would take a handful of candies from his pocket. They were imported candies, wrapped in gay-colored papers. They were for me. Not a boxful, nor a bagful, but a handful. He didn't send them backstage, either; he presented them to me personally over the footlights. For the first few weeks, I found it amusing to get his gift, but as time

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went on, I came to dread Mondays because the man had developed the habit of waiting until my last chorus to deliver his gift.

In my act, which hasn't varied much with the years, my last chorus is one of partial undress. Clutching the velvet curtain in one hand, the last shreds of my costume in the other, I had one line of dialogue to deliver: "Oh, boys, if I take that off, I'll catch cold!" It was a corny line, I admit, but it got a laugh. Not on Mondays, though. Not with the candy man pattering down the aisle and hissing at me. If I tried to ignore him, the hissing became louder. He would lean further over the footlights, offering me the handful of paper-covered candies. What could I do? Somehow, I managed to juggle the scenery and the costume in such a way that I could bend over and grab the candy. It was an effort to smile and thank the man, but he was a customer, so I tried. With a courtly bow, he would return to his seat on the aisle as though nothing had happened and I could finish my number.

That was Monday. On Thursdays, a thin-faced man with a great sense of mother love sat in the upper right box, and once a week, he tossed a bouquet of red roses at my feet. It was touching and I appreciated the gesture, but he had trained himself to hold his flowers until I had finished my last encore. By that time, I had no scenery to clutch, no shreds of a costume left, nothing but three small pasted-on ribbon bows between me and the red roses. I managed to pick them up every Thursday in those days, but if anyone should ask me to do it today, I would have to say: "No, brother; frankly, no." I'm not as agile as I was eight years ago.

The red rose man had a way of leaning over the box railing that was unmistakable. Even in the dark of the theatre I could recognize him. I did not know about his mother love, though, until Mother's Day that season. Instead of the usual dozen, that day there were two dozen and a card attached read: "To Gypsy Rose Lee, because she reminds me of my mother!"

Another steady customer — steady when his ship was in — was a sailor. I've always had a soft spot in my heart for sailors, but this one will always be my favorite. Not just because he sent me postcards from all over the world, either. I loved the postcards, but I loved even more the thought that went with them. With every postcard, I got a bulky package. Inside were cardboards elaborately cut

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out to hold coins. I have a collection of liras, pesos and pence that would make a numismatist turn green with envy — and all because of my sailor.

The sailor sat in the lower left box. In one week, he saw the show twelve times. The ship was in port for only three days and the sailor spent all that time in the Irving Place. He arrived an hour before the performance to make certain his seat would be reserved. In his hands, he carried a corsage for me, a shoebox lunch for himself. Once in, he never left the theatre; hence the lunch. He applauded loudly for all the girls' songs, but during the comedy bits, he thumbed carelessly through a picture magazine and during the ballet, he took a short nap. During intermission, he always bought a soda pop from the candy butcher.

That week I was doing an audience number called "Powder My Back." With a powder puff on a long stick, I pranced gaily up and down the runway, asking the customers to oblige. On my encore, I went to the sailor's box. Even after he'd rehearsed the back powdering for twelve performances, he handled the puff as though it were a stoker. My back was black-and-blue for a week, but that is a small sacrifice, I think, for the Navy. Before he left town again, I presented him with the puff, stick and all. I couldn't use it again. Not for sentimental reasons, but because he had worn it out.

And that was the sailor. On Tuesdays, it was the perfume man. He wore an ascot tie folded over and over, with a huge diamond horseshoe stickpin for decorative purposes. The tie was tucked into a fawn-colored vest. I'm sure he wore striped trousers, but I had no way of knowing. He always sat near the runway, in the second row, and I couldn't see his trousers. He had two diamonds set in his teeth, one in each bicuspid. Or is it molar? At any rate, they were in the center teeth, and when he smiled, he looked like a beacon. He would wait until I was out on the runway, alone and unprotected, then he'd flash his diamonds in a way that terrified me. When he had me so shaky that I could just manage to crawl back on the stage, he'd shove a small bottle of perfume at me. I would have to kneel down on the runway to accept the gift. The perfume was always the same, Coty's Emeraude. The dollar-size bottle.

Another steady customer had a snow-white moustache. Not a neatly-trimmed hunk of hair on his upper lip. No, indeed. Without

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ever having measured it, I can truthfully say that moustache was more than a foot long, including the portion that was face. We called him "Handle Bars." He never gave me presents, but I liked having him in the theatre once a week. He had become a good luck omen to me — when Handle Bars sneezed, and he had hay fever even in the winter, I could depend on good news coming.

Richard the Great wasn't exactly a customer because he never paid for a ticket, but he was in the theatre once a week anyway. The air-cooling system of the Irving Place was a simple one: we opened the doors. And when we opened the doors, Richard the Great walked in. Because he never bought a ticket, he couldn't insist on occupying the same seat every week, but I could always spot him in the house. He cupped his hands when he applauded and it made a thunderous noise. To show his appreciation even further, he would toss sticks of chewing gum on the stage at the finish of the girls' numbers. One stick of gum per girl. Richard the Great had no favorites. We shared and shared alike.

Last June, I opened on Broadway in *Star and Garter* — $4.40 and many blocks from the old Irving Place. Nothing had changed since the last time I played Times Square. There was Tommy Manville, still escorting two blondes, still buying front row seats whether he used them or not. And there was the man who owns an ermine coat. He had a girl to fit the coat with him. The diamonds and the orchids were there. Nothing was changed. Best of all, I realized, the customers weren't really any different. They were just Irving Place dressed up.

Of course, I was nervous on opening night. All actors are, even those in my field. I stumbled awkwardly through my first two scenes. The third scene was my specialty. As I stepped on the stage, I missed the smoky air, the shouts of "take it off" from the balcony, the candy butchers standing at the rear of the aisles, waiting to go into their spiels. The musicians in the orchestra pit wore tuxedos, not shirtsleeves. No one leaned over the box railing. I felt my nervousness grow. Then I heard a sneeze. Even after six years, I recognized that sneeze! I looked around for the familiar white suit, the white moustache, but I could have saved myself the trouble. I might have known he'd be sitting in the third row center. It was Friday and Handle Bars had showed up, as always!

I haven't been nervous since. All

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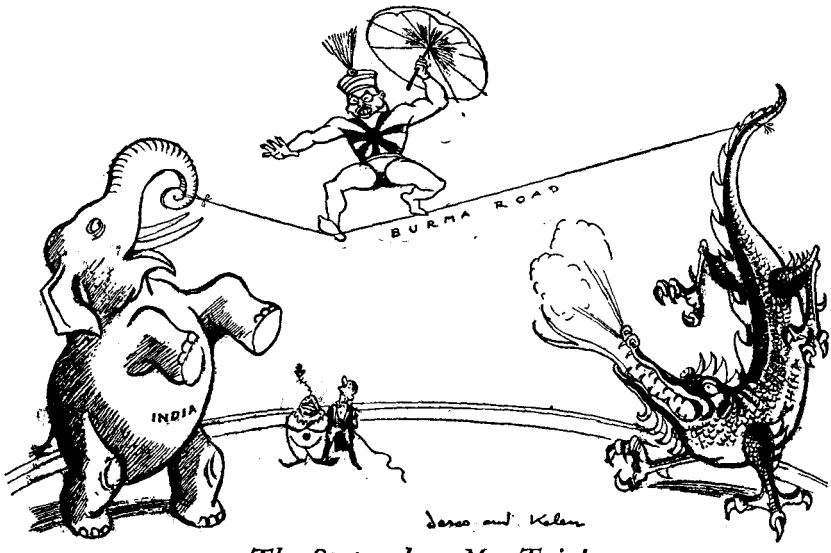
the steady customers have been in. I'm still using Coty's Emeraude perfume. It would be silly to buy perfume when I have a bottle sent me every week. Not over the footlights, though. The management of the Music Box is not like the management of the old Irving. I have a red rose in my hair and there are eleven more in my dressing room sink this minute. The red rose man is leaning over the railing of the upper right box, waiting for the performance to start. He's seen the show five times. And I still get candies. They aren't imported now, but they're still wrapped in gay-colored papers. I have a sneaking hunch that the candy man wraps them himself. Richard the Great has appeared. Because he never buys a ticket, I had to pay $4.40 for one stick of chewing gum.

The sailor hasn't been in yet. I just got a postcard from him and a bulky package. I had no idea the pennies in Australia were so large. They are as big as a silver dollar and just as heavy. The postcard was a picture of mountains. On the back of it, the sailor wrote: "Dear Gypsy: Haven't seen the show yet, but I will. First I got to clean up some unfinished business." It was signed, "Gobs of love."



The Stupendous Mr. Tojo!

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CREDO OF AN OLD-FASHIONED CONSERVATIVE

By George Barton Cutten

A conservative is a person who has an open mind to the proved values of the past, and wishes to be reasonably sure of his course before he disrupts the conditions under which these values have developed and matured. He considers the experience of a million, or even a thousand, years a safer criterion for conduct than the untried and unproven vagaries of mental instability. With one hand, he grasps the branch above him but does not relinquish his hold upon the branch below until he has tested his weight on it, and is sure of his new hold. He is the man who would rather be sure than sorry; who, when sure he's right, then goes ahead.

Nature is not only his mother but his teacher. Nature is slow but sure, and does not do much backtracking. She will carry along vermiform appendices, toes, hair and other impedimenta after their apparent usefulness is over, just in case of need. When she finally lets go of any vestigial organ, you can be sure it is outdated. Those who are convinced of the soundness of nature's ways are naturally conservative. The physical and biological scientists will work for years on a problem after they are convinced that they have made a valuable discovery. They may make a tentative announcement, but they warn their colleagues not to consider the matter settled until further experiment makes the conclusion indisputable. No half-baked theories and untried dogmas come out of their laboratories: they want to be sure, because they can always be checked.

It is in the realm of social science that we most frequently find the radical who desires to be called "progressive." He pays little attention to the natural laws of progress but trusts to the wish-fulfillment attitudes which stampede the mob. A promise cannot be too extravagant or a proposed course of action too grotesque to attract those who are looking for easy living. These people are always praising the radi-

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cals for their interest in the shiftless, the lazy and the inefficient — an interest shown too frequently only in the exercise of an active imagination. At the same time, they condemn the conservative for ruthlessly insisting that facts, not hallucinations, shall be the basis for action.

This means that the radical is the enthusiastic idealist and the conservative is the sombre realist. The trouble with the idealist is that he wants to start from his ultimate destination rather than from where he actually is. He talks so plausibly about stepping from one sunbeam to another that one of his auditors tries it, only to find that, however attractive the idea, sunbeams were not made for stepping on, and that disaster speedily descends upon anyone who takes the idealistic position seriously. A very good illustration, which we are not likely soon to forget, is the late attitude and influence of the pacifist. Pacifism is a delightful and attractive ideal which we hope we may ultimately achieve, but to act like pacifists, when we were really not living in that kind of a world, projected us into the very mess of unpreparedness in which we find ourselves today. Nobody wants war, not even the professional soldier, but to call the realists "warmongers," simply because they recognized conditions and clearly saw the inevitable disaster of the morning after, is allowing yourself to be mired in your own daydreams.

We sometimes hear a charge made that the conservatives are the wealthy. Perhaps so, though I'm intimately acquainted with one exception. The charge continues that when a person becomes wealthy he becomes conservative because he fears to lose his wealth. Isn't there something more to it than that? Might it not be that conservative persons are more apt to become wealthy? One can lose money much faster than he can make it, and incautious steps may lead to financial disaster, or at least prevent the accumulation and retention of wealth. Occasionally, one reads of someone who has made a fortune suddenly and accidentally, but if so, there are two things to be noted: in the first place, it is an exception or it would not be news; in the second place, such fortunes usually disappear as rapidly as they come.

American businessmen and industrialists are sometimes referred to as the arch-conservatives, but they have led the world with their startling innovations and revolutionary methods. They spend hundreds of millions of dollars a year in research, and research points to

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progress. The research department must be sure, that's all. Then a new addition appears, or an alteration is made in a jiffy. A conservative is not a person who does not change, but a person who changes advisedly.

Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Well, no, they don't, but some try. It is the conservative who prevents their wasting more time on these fruitless efforts. But more especially, he keeps us from going too fast and stays the hand which plucks the fruit before it is ripe.

II

During the last few years, there has been a lot of maudlin chatter about some highly-prized intangible known as "the open mind." Some of the minds behind the chatter have evidently been open at the bottom instead of at the top. Habit is nature's most effective timesaver and a closed mind is a part of the mechanism of habit. When a theory has been investigated time and again, and a certain result is proved beyond cavil, then a judgment is formed and the mind is fortunately closed on that point. The so-called open-minded person who continues to thrash the old straw is wasting his time and that of anyone who will pay attention to him.

I suppose if God had "the open mind" and should become a radical instead of the conservative which He is, the girl babies would now be born with hairline eyebrows, vermilion lips, purple fingernails and crimson toenails. But no, the girl babies come along no different from what they were ten thousand years ago. Boy babies, too, are not different from those born in Greece thousands of years ago. What a jaundiced muddle this world would be if God should cease to be conservative and permit acquired characteristics to be transmitted.

I presume that at least 90 per cent of life's experiences deal with matters to which the mind is definitely closed. We could, of course, open our minds to such questions as, "Will the earth continue to revolve about the sun? Will water continue to freeze at thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit?" Most of us have closed our minds to such questions, and have gone upon our way to do some useful work. Isn't it about time that someone was extolling the closed mind and giving the open mind a breathing spell? The open mind too frequently deals with the incredible and the incredible is hard on the nerves.

A scientific mind is always critical and never gullible. Some day try gulling the physicist, the chem-

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ist, or the biologist, and see how open his mind is. He demands to be shown. Your only hope is with a certain brand of so-called social scientist. I cannot speak for him. The trouble is that his failures do not register immediately upon a dial or in a test tube and he eases himself out of his mistakes so gradually and over so many years that none of them looks so much like a wild goose chase. By that time, some one of his brethren attracts attention by making some equally preposterous proposal which, for the moment, supersedes the failure and the new schemer makes his bid for the open mind.

The conservative is an evolutionist, not a revolutionist. He sees that progress has always been slow and, in the main, orderly and he accepts the program. He seems to be satisfied with God. He expects the universe to be ruled by law instead of by miracle and finds that such is the case. If a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and the conservative views the progress of the world by millenniums instead of by decades, he notes that advancement is gradual and regular, and that man, with his petty little schemes which he stirs up and spreads out in his dainty little patty-pans, makes not a ripple on the surface of time. There have always been radicals, but no particular brand has continued long in the limelight. If they hurry too much, or push across the procession, they are trampled under foot. If they happen to run with the parade, they are soon lost in the crowd. Many of the most significant events in the world's history were not recognized as such at the time, so gradual was their growth.

The conservatives are always on the winning side, for notwithstanding all the radicals can do, we go ahead only about so fast anyway. Nature is not only conservative herself, but has so arranged affairs that *we* shall be. It has done so by providing that the instincts, not the imagination or the intelligence, should be the motive power in our lives. But are not the instincts for the use of the lower animals? Of course, that's where we come in. The intelligence and imagination have two functions: (1) They provide rationalization for the acts which the instincts compel, and make us feel comfortable about what we have done or are about to do; (2) they may provide secondary satisfactions for instinctive impulses and sublimate the primary instinctive urges. Our instincts are surely conservative, for they take us back hundreds of thousands if not millions of years, and are as

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strong in the human as in other animals, but merely more successfully camouflaged.

III

Let us come down to the present problems. Why are we fighting this war? We are fighting this war to satisfy in a primary manner our pugnacious instinct and our instinct of self-assertion, and probably other instincts. When will it end? When we have fully satisfied our pugnacious instinct — then we win; or until self-preservation dictates a cessation of hostilities — then we lose. In days of ease and lack of tension, the intelligence and imagination have their innings, but in times of emergency and danger, the instincts take charge.

Nothing seems more futile, except as a wartime diversion, than to spend time talking about peace terms now. We can entertain ourselves by playing today that we shall be generous to our enemies; it satisfies some altruistic impulse and does not cost anything. When the time comes, of course, we'll not be, or at least, I hope not. Being generous to our enemies, permitting them to break the terms of the last peace and lending money to them and selling them vital war materials made this war possible. When peace-time comes, the conservatives, not the radicals, should dictate the terms, if we want a lasting peace.

The propaganda technique of the radicals is an old one, and has been found effective when it has not been overdone. It consists in linking one's opponent with some unpopular or distasteful person or cause. The present attempt is to connect the conservative with the war or with Hitler or with the Japs, but it simply does not fit. It wrinkles at the joints. It is true that one might indicate some insignificant or unimportant similarity, but the underlying cause points an accusing finger in the direction of the radicals. It is the people who want to save the world by short-cuts who cause the wars and the turmoils. These include Hitler, Mussolini, the Japs, the Russian communists and the modern radicals of the American type. It is true that this salvation may be somewhat exclusive: Mr. Hitler does not include the Jews, the Japs do not include the white races, and the modern radicals do not include the conservatives and the capitalists in their respective schemes.

The delusion of saviorhood is one of the most impressive methods of attempting to materialize the visionary under the guise of altruism, and easily captures those who re-

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fuse to think their way through. Especially does it appeal to those who abound in the enthusiasms of youthful ignorance. But the old world refuses to be saved in a hurry; it follows in its own deliberate schedule. Knowing this, the conservative stands by to steady the boat. When the miniature hurricane blows in the right direction, he runs before the wind; when it is contrary, he will lie to until the breeze abates. Revolutions come and revolutions go, until they cease to be even exciting. One does wonder, however, just what direction a new one will take or which old one will be revived.

Having found out by bitter experience that the more haste the less speed, the conservative has learned to make haste slowly. He is the real progressive, for he is working at it every minute, along well-established lines, in tune with natural laws, and taking each step forward toward the desired end. No, he's not spectacular, he does not make the headlines, and does not get wildly excited over things he cannot help. But adding here a little and there a little, he can look back over his lifetime with the satisfaction of having helped somewhat and of having hindered little. To be sure, he has been blamed because he has applied the brakes, when possible, to those who have enthusiastically espoused impractical schemes of people whose good intentions were only exceeded by their irrational ideas.

Being sure of his position, the conservative can afford to be tolerant, and of course, he is. Doubt and uncertainty are the soil in which intolerance sprouts and grows. Because his schemes have never had the benefit of a trial, the radical naturally lacks certainty and this reveals itself in his intolerant attitude. The very word "conservative," as he handles it, is an accusation and a slur and the radical speaks it as though the seeds of wrath were wedged between his teeth. But, after all, it's the staunch old conservative who bears the burden of the world's cares and sorrows, who is blamed for the world's mistakes and blunders, and when the radicals have messed up everything messable, he is the one upon whom we depend to straighten things out. He doesn't get much credit here, but I do hope that his ear will be so attuned to celestial utterances that he will clearly distinguish the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," and when looking around to see for whom they are intended, I am sure he will find himself, as usual, standing alone.

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▶ *The only woman journalist caught in the disaster records some*

HORRORS IN HONG KONG

By Gwen Dew

The young white woman looked coldly into my eyes and told me how she had been gang-raped by the Jap soldiers. She gritted her teeth, and in a dispassionate monotone, told me intimate, terrible things that she never could have told a man reporter. The men had stripped off her clothes, jabbed her with bayonets, then subjected her to unbelievable indecencies. They hurled her into a corner, then one by one, time after time, all night long, they ravished her, while she cursed them in her heart and determined not to give them the satisfaction of crying out.

"Tell them," she urged, "tell them back in England and America what they can expect from these fiends!"

We were sitting on a cliff, high above the concentration camp, where no Jap sentry could hear. I looked at her as she sat there — a British nurse, about thirty, with brown hair and dark eyes. Once she had worn a trim, white dress, and had placed cool, capable hands on the brows of suffering white men and yellow men alike. She had come all the way from England to Hong Kong to be helpful. When the Japs had approached her hospital, Colonel Dr. Black and Dr. Whitney had stood before the door, holding the Red Cross flag before them.

"This is a hospital," Dr. Black had told the officer. "You will respect it, of course."

The officer sneered a command and Jap soldiers ran their long bayonets through both the doctors. The others stepped on the writhing bodies as they crowded into the hospital. Inside, fifty English and Canadian soldiers lay wounded on the floor or on cots. The Japs ripped the bandages from the wounds and bayoneted the helpless men where they lay.

Then the sex ordeal began for the nurses. They were lined up, naked, for the soldiers to ogle, then they were grabbed. All of them were raped throughout the night, and three of them were found next day bayoneted to death. The rest, however, managed to scramble into a

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truck driven in for them the next day by an heroic medical officer. The nurse told me the story after the fall of Hong Kong, after all of us prisoners had been herded like rats into narrow quarters, to sleep on the floor from five to ten in a room.

As an American newspaperwoman, I had gone to China to make pictures in the interior, but I had been trapped in Hong Kong. War struck us in Hong Kong at the same moment it struck Pearl Harbor. The American Clipper was poised at its base to take off for Manila. A plane dived, there was a burst of steel and flame . . . and the Clipper was a charred hull. The machine guns rattled and the bombs exploded in the crowded Kai Tak Market and eight hundred men, women and children became a tangled, mangled mass of threshing flesh.

As the Japs dropped their bundles for Britain, I ran through the streets with my camera. A naked Chinese child ran before me. Its insides were tumbling out, but it clung to the hands of a woman whose chin and breasts had been blown away.

A man was being lowered from a burning balcony on a narrow street. His legs were dangling from bloody bits of muscle and his face was charred as though a blow torch had been turned upon it. A bomb hit the entrance to an air-raid tunnel as masses of Chinese attempted to enter. The smear of humanity left on the rocks and pavement reminded one of what's left of a cockroach when you step on it on the floor. A man was being lowered with ropes. His dead limbs dangled against the scarlet sunset. I took a picture, because the scene was symbolic of humanity on a crucifix in the civilized year of 1942.

Part of Hong Kong, Kowloon, lies on the mainland, but the main British concentration was on Victoria Island. The terror hit Kowloon first. As the British police withdrew to the island, the Chinese looters went berserk in Kowloon. Madmen with axes and staves, they swept through the city, pillaging and destroying what they couldn't carry off. They stripped many Chinese girls, looking for valuables, and British and Americans were dragged from their commandeered automobiles.

Then the Japs poured in with their bayonets. It's characteristic that the Japs, the smallest of soldiers, carry the longest bayonets. The Jap loves the sensation of his bayonet slipping through human bowels. In every mass of dead I saw in the streets, the bodies had been punctured time and time again.

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A Jap will bayonet a dead body as he passes it. The whites left in Kowloon fled headlong for the island as the Japs entered. Ships loaded with millions of dollars worth of supplies, food and ammunition fell into Jap hands. Immense oil installations belonging to American firms were abandoned untouched.

On the island, we were trapped. Using maps prepared by Chinese traitors, the Japs began firing into gun positions and government buildings with unerring accuracy. Above were Jap planes, coming and going at will, leisurely dropping their bombs, for there was not a single British plane to send against them. Offshore, the Jap fleet stood and lobbed shells into the Aberdeen naval base. We were easy targets, almost without defense. We could only sit and hope that the rumored approaching Chinese army was a real one. It wasn't.

During endless days and nights, we adjusted ourselves to air raids, blackout, shelling, bombing, death. I was at the Repulse Bay Hotel when the Japs landed on the island and closed in. The Japs surrounded us and snipers began picking us off. At the hotel, we were three hundred soldiers from every part of the Empire, and two hundred travelers from over the globe. I helped with the dead and the wounded. But we were without light, without water, and without food. To avoid massacre for all of us, the soldiers slipped away in the night and we civilians hoisted the white flag over the hotel at dawn.

II

The coming of the little men with the big guns was horrifying. The captives were marched off to Jap headquarters, hands above their heads, prodded by bayonets. Jewelry was ripped away, questions asked, insults offered. A Chinese coolie came across the beach, unaware that the Japs had taken the hotel. A soldier grabbed him, struck him across the face, then bayoneted him twice. Other soldiers, grinning, bayoneted the body as they passed it.

The following day, prodded by the bayonets, we were marched into the city, the two hundred of us, men, women and children. The oldest eighty-three, the youngest four months, we marched eight miles along a path I shall never forget. The path was lined with dead soldiers — Britishers, Canadians, Scots, Indians, boys and men we knew, lying dead in the burning sun. Some were mangled, some burned a purplish black, some sleeping quietly where they had fallen.

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The smell of decaying death spread like a heavy fog over the scene.

Then came the part the Japs seemed to relish even more than their rape. They paraded us, the hungry, bedraggled two hundred of us, through the crowded Chinese section. Struggling with our bundles, exhausted, our tongues swollen, our feet blistered, we were the perfect picture of the Fall of the White Man in the Far East. A white man lying disemboweled in the dirt, a white woman snatched naked and gang-raped, a parade of whites carrying their own pitiful burdens — these pictures delighted the Jap heart.

It was Christmas Eve and we spent it on the floor of a paint factory. On Christmas Day, we were put in a hotel on a rice-and-water diet, with newspapers on the windows, under orders which, if broken, were "punishable by death according to military law."

We thought we had been badly handled, but it developed that we were the most fortunate of all. We at the Repulse Hotel had been the first to surrender. The formal surrender of the island came the afternoon of Christmas Day, after we were comparatively safe in prison. Following the surrender, the Jap soldiers were given three days to "enjoy the fruits of victory." Then the rape and the murder had begun on the island. The Happy Valley section was hardest hit. Friends who lived there told me they can never forget the screams of the women. No woman was respected — Chinese, Portuguese, Filipino, French and British. Nor was age given any consideration. The white prisoners were herded like cattle into brothels. They were treated and fed worse than the worst criminals. The water had been turned off for two weeks. There was no bedding except the dirty, thin mattresses used in the brothels and everyone preferred the bare boards. Huge rats, as well as all the vermin of the Far East, infested the place. No medical attention was allowed.

A friend told me this story. I am withholding her name because she is still there. Attached to St. John's Ambulance Corps, she was at a hospital near North Point. When the Japs rushed in, the doctors and nurses were lined up before a firing squad. There were French, Chinese, Russian and English doctors. At the last minute, the officer ordered the women from the line-up and had them marched away. The doctors rushed the Jap firing line with bare hands, but they were slashed to pieces.

From Christmas Day until the next June 30, when I was released

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and allowed to return to America, I lived almost continuously in the slack suit in which I was captured. Most of the time I slept in it. There were ten of us in one of my rooms. I slept on the floor, covered with a thin blanket. It was extremely cold. I never had a bed, chair or table. Gendarmes inspected our rooms almost hourly. They loved to swing bayonets in our faces or poke us in the stomach with them. We were not allowed to group in the hallways to talk. We could not go to the roof for air.

One day, peeping through a tear in the newspaper on my window, I saw two Indian police chasing a Chinese looter. They shot him and their stray bullets killed a girl. They carried her off on a plank, with her hands swinging limply over the side.

As the months dragged on, we fought the twin horrors of hunger and disease. We were given a small bowl of rice and a half cup of thin gravy in the morning, and another bowl of rice and a half cup of bad stew in the afternoon. That was all. All of us lost from twenty to a hundred pounds. Beri-beri, pellagra, scurvy, all the vitamin deficiency diseases appeared. In six months, the Japs issued no milk, no butter, no fruit, no green vegetables, and only three eggs. A few who preferred death attempted to escape. They were returned with bayonet and whip marks on their bodies.

The Red Cross was never allowed to enter our camp. We had no communication with the outside world. The women whose husbands were soldiers suffered most, because they could not find out whether their husbands were alive.

In the eyes of the English girl who had been gang-raped, I saw the summation of all the horrors meted out by the Jap armies. They are determined upon the rape, the ruin, and the subjugation of the world — particularly, the white world.

The Moslem World

is slated as the next great arena of conflict. Iran, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Arabia — what of their people, their politics, their governments?

Dr. Edward J. Bing, who knows the Near East intimately, answers these questions in a startling article. Watch for it in The American Mercury.

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THE NEGLECTED ART OF CURSING

By John Erskine

Cursing is one-half the art of poetry. When we forget how to curse, our poems flop around on one wing but cannot get off the ground. Cursing as a divine art followed closely after creation itself. "Upon thy belly shalt thou go. . . . In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

These are model curses, essential poetry, not to be confused with profanity. Profanity is irreverent and blasphemous utterance, most often precipitated by loss of temper, and relying upon unoriginal epithets to convey dislike, with small regard for truth. Cursing is the opposite of blessing, but like blessing, it is an invocation of the divine will. In both halves of the poetic art, there is an element of prophecy; since good and evil wear their logical future in their face, the poet, having looked them over, prays that they may get on faster toward where they are going. Profanity throws verbal brickbats; a curse draws a portrait. For the curse to be effective, the portrait must be recognizable, and to be recognizable, it must be true. In the three famous curses in the Garden of Eden, the characteristics of the snake, of the woman and of the man are absolutely clear and nothing more is needed.

All poetry should be passionate and should carry the conviction of truthful portraiture; if, nowadays, poetry is low-temperatured and vague, one explanation may be that our poets neglect the art of cursing. Such neglect has never occurred in days of greatness. When Moses listed the blessings which would result from obedience to Jehovah, he mentioned also the curses which would attend disobedience. If the curses weren't of first quality, at least they were pretty close to the top:

> The Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. . . . The Lord will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed. . . .

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> The Lord shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

David, great and stormy poet, is a gorgeous curser and his best things in this vein are too well known to need recital here. I like the directness of his method, and the frank admission which he invariably includes, that he hopes to be on hand to see the curse work out.

> Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth. . . . The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

Balaam, the prophet, has the bad luck to be remembered chiefly for the brief but impressive conversation with his ass, but his story illustrates the art of cursing in theory and practice. He was requested by Balak, King of Moab, to curse the children of Israel as they emerged from Egypt, but he declined on the ground that it was no use cursing those who were destined to be blessed. Here we have that regard for truth in portraiture which marks the authentic poet. Balak urged the prophet to look at the people of Israel before he made up his mind, so Balaam went where he could get a look, and on the way, the ass spoke and the angel warned him to say only the word which the Lord put in his mouth. So Balaam asked Balak how he could curse whom God had not cursed, and Balak urged him to look at Israel from another angle of the landscape. Then, seeing the host of those who came out of Egypt, Balaam pronounced not a curse but a blessing, having as the Bible says, his eyes open.

That clearness of vision we lack today; we do not observe the grounds for cursing and our expressions of condemnation rarely get beyond profanity.

Though a curser may have lost his temper, a good curse must give a portrait which would be true even in another mood. It is the saving grace of Falstaff, for example, that though dishonest otherwise, he is a poet and as a poet he tells the truth. When Bardolph, as you recall, has the poor judgment to tell Falstaff he grows too fat, the knight fixes his attention on Bardolph's nose and describes what he sees there; like Balaam, he prophesies having his eyes open, and whether the result be blessing or curse, depends on Bardolph's nose.

> *Falstaff:* Do thou amend thy face and I'll amend my life; thou art our admiral, thou bearest the lantern in the poop, but 'tis in the nose of thee; thou art the Knight of the Burning Lamp.
>
> *Bardolph:* Why, Sir John, my face does you no harm.

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Falstaff: No, I'll be sworn; I make as good use of it as many a man doth of a Death's-head or a memento mori: I never see thy face but I think upon hell-fire and Dives that lived in purple; for there he is in his robes, burning, burning. If thou wert any way given to virtue, I would swear by thy face: my oath should be "by this fire, that's God's angel;" but thou art altogether given over, and wert indeed, but for the light in thy face, the son of utter darkness.

All of which boils down to the fact that Falstaff doesn't like to be reminded how fat he is. His words, however, convey more than he intended, simply because he saw clearly and portrayed accurately; recognizing Bardolph's nose, we realize that he is already cursed, and that Falstaff's breathless supply of images merely varnish the picture.

Until fairly modern times no great English poet neglected the art of cursing. Milton excelled in it; Dryden carried it to extraordinary heights. To describe Dryden as no more than a satirist, one who holds evil up to ridicule or scorn, is to do small justice to his powers. He perfected the allegorical curse; those who deserve castigation are presented under metaphorical names, yet their portraits are fatally recognizable. The result is that the curse is remembered, but the object of it is not thereby saved from his proper oblivion.

Thomas Shadwell, a second-rate dramatist, was a bitter enemy of Dryden's, and Glorious John reciprocated with interest, drawing Shadwell's portrait more than once, most terribly in the second part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, where he appears as Og. Shadwell, be it remembered, was as fat as Falstaff himself, and though his conversation was witty, his literary efforts were flat as a cold pancake. There was a blight on his pen, to which Dryden alludes in the line, "He curses God, but God before cursed him." It is generally conceded that Dryden here carries malediction somewhat beyond the divine intention:

Now stop your noses, readers, all and some,
For here's a tun of midnight work to come,[1]
Og from a treason-tavern rolling home,
Round as a globe, and liquored every chink.
. . . . . .
With all this bulk there's nothing lost in Og,
For every inch that is not fool is rogue.
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spewed to make the batter.
When wine has given him courage to blaspheme,
He curses God, but God before cursed him.
. . . . . .
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull

[1] Midnight was the hour for seventeenth century cesspool cleaning. — J. E.

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With this prophetic blessing — *Be thou dull;*
Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd delight
Fit for thy bulk, do anything but write.
Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless men,
A strong nativity — but for the pen;
Eat opium, mingle arsenic with thy drink,
Still thou mayest live, avoiding pen and ink.
I see, I see, 'tis counsel given in vain,
For treason, botched in rhyme, will be thy bane;
Rhyme is the rock on which thou art to wreck,
'Tis fatal to thy fame and to thy neck.

II

The giants remind us what cursing may be, but from the nineteenth century on, the art has decayed, and perhaps all other kinds of poetry with it, to our sad impoverishment at the present moment, when we are stirred by vast loves and hates but have no adequate voice to express either. Three famous nineteenth century curses come to mind, not much inferior to the best of the golden ages, but set apart by this curious fact, that their authors were afterwards a little ashamed of them, and in two cases had them suppressed. There's the modern threat of moral anemia.

In 1845, in his satirical poem, "New Timon: A Romance of London," Bulwer Lytton made a quite uncalled-for attack on Tennyson. Are you accustomed to think of Tennyson as a somewhat too-gentle poet? He replied to the attack with some verses called "The New Timon," which appeared in *Punch*, February 26, 1846:

We know him, out of Shakspere's art,
And those fine curses which he spoke;
The old Timon, with his noble heart,
That, strongly loathing, greatly broke.

So died the Old: here comes the New:
Regard him: a familiar face:
I *thought* we knew him: What, it's you,
The padded man — that wears the stays —

Who killed the girls and thrilled the boys
With dandy pathos when you wrote,
A Lion, you, that made a noise,
And shook a mane *en papillotes*.

. . . . . .

What profits now to understand
The merits of a spotless shirt —
A dapper boot — a little hand —
If half the little soul is dirt?

. . . . . .

A Timon you! Nay, nay, for shame:
It looks too arrogant a gest —
The fierce old man — to take *his* name,
You bandbox! Off, and let him rest.

The portrait was recognizable and it rather settled Bulwer Lytton, but Tennyson said afterwards that the lines were too bitter and it was a friend, not he, who sent them to *Punch*. That alibi is true but some of us wish that the hard-hitting lines had never been suppressed.

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We have the same admiration and the same regret for Browning's explosion over FitzGerald's unlucky remark about Mrs. Browning. FitzGerald was on good terms with Robert Browning, but he was too sound a critic to join the overpraise of Elizabeth Barrett's work. *Aurora Leigh*, her slow-trickling novel in verse, bored him to tears. When she died, in 1861, he wrote in a private letter, never expecting his words to be published:

> Mrs. Browning's death was rather a relief to me, I must say; no more Aurora Leighs, thank God! A woman of real genius, I know, but what is the upshot of it all? She and her Sex had better mind the Kitchen and their children.

Crotchety Fitz was not at his best in that passage, yet all might have been well if his letters hadn't been published after *his* death. Robert Browning, in old age, sat down to read them and on July 13, 1889, *The Athenaeum* contained one poem of his against which the charge of obscurity has never been brought. A curse must be clear.

TO EDWARD FITZGERALD

I chanced upon a new book yesterday,
I opened it, and where my finger lay
'Twixt page and uncut page these words I read —
Some six or seven at most — and learned thereby
That you, FitzGerald, whom by ear and eye
She never knew, thanked God my wife was dead.
Ay, dead! And were yourself alive, good Fitz,
How to return your thanks would task my wits;
Kicking you seems the common lot of curs —
While more appropriate greeting lends you grace;
Surely to spit there glorifies your face —
Spitting — from lips once sanctified by Hers.

I never read that poem without wanting to give a cheer for Robert Browning, yet he was sorry for the impulsive and, as I think, manly blow. In deference to his request, editors keep the poem out of his editions.

Whittier, our American poet, the true genius who wrote "Snow-Bound," "Barbara Frietchie," "Skipper Ireson's Ride," and "Telling the Bees," permitted himself one magnificent curse — which afterwards he modified and softened. His anger was moved in no personal quarrel but in protest against compromise with evil. Strange that he should have backed away one step from his first stand. When Daniel Webster made his speech in support of the Fugitive Slave Law, many a New Englander besides Whittier felt that their idol had betrayed them. The admiration, the almost worship, of their chief spokesman is difficult to realize, now that we are beyond even

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the echoes of his astounding eloquence. The shock of his defection tore from Whittier the poem "Ichabod," which by its title proclaimed that the glory had departed. Another poem, "The Lost Occasion," written after the Civil War, tried to express the regret and the condemnation without the curse, but in poetry as in life, benevolence is no substitute for vigor.

Whittier was addressing a New England which still read the Bible, and in the poem's concluding lines would not miss a reference to Noah, who went in for wine-making, got drunk and lost his pants. The climax of the curse-portrait is the suggestion that Webster, like Noah, needs a blanket. There are other points — but you might as well look up the Biblical passage and the poem for yourself.

Nowadays, our poets do little if any cursing; likewise, they do little blessing. Perhaps we can't have one without the other. Perhaps we can't greatly love what is good unless we strongly hate what is evil. Our hate must be more than strong. For a good curse, our hate must be imaginative; we must really see the thing we are cursing and its logical future. If ever our civilization had a good subject for curses, that subject, one would think, would be Adolf Hitler. He has been damned in verse, in prose and in cartoons, but he has not been cursed, not in the sense we are considering here. We have called him names, but historians fifty years from now will find in the name-calling only our condemnation, not his portrait. We content ourselves with throwing things at him, yet the portrait of that man would be a perfect curse, all the more terrible if it showed him self-persuaded of his own sincerity, doing what he does because he can't possibly do anything else, wrecking humanity because he identifies good will with destruction, surrounded only by men like himself — his idea of heaven being our idea of hell.

There is need of cursing. Why should the poets run up their blood pressure in silence, or toss mere brickbats of profanity? We might postpone the titillations of sensitive spirits when they contemplate a bit of still life, a tuft of grass or a stretch of dilapidated fence; just now, we need a report of their feelings in the presence of tyranny. They must feel strongly to make themselves heard above the battle.

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THE THEATRE

By George Jean Nathan

For God, For Country, For Box-Office

Fatty's First Play. — That is what Bernard Shaw dubbed it when it was first shown in London thirty years ago, a crack which its author, Gilbert Chesterton, described in turn as Skinny's Worst Pun. Its name is *Magic* and, now revived, it discloses itself to be still one of the most gently persuading plays on the subject of faith that have come along in its time.

When the late lamented Harry Thurston Peck was editor of the old *The Bookman*, he inaugurated a department devoted to words that deserved, he contended, a term in the cooler. Among them was the overworked adjective *charming*. I agree with him, especially in the case of plays, since, if used at all, it should be associated mainly with women and snakes. Yet with hundreds of other adjectives lying around loose, I can think of no apter one to apply to this particular play, since it factually charms its theme into the consciousness instead of, as is the more usual practice, forcing it.

Plays about faith have customarily pursued routine courses. In the Wilson Barrett era of the modern stage, it was promoted into an audience's emotion in terms of Roman arena lions that viewed all Christians, whether as unappetizing as Charles Dalton or as *délicieuse* as Maud Jeffries, in the light of *pièces de résistance* especially prepared for them by Theodore of the Ritz. Barrett's side-kick in the racket was Hall Caine who got rid of the lions, got growling actor-managers dressed up as clergymen to take their places, and had them try to convince themselves that a belief in God was a satisfactory substitute for the ravishingly beautiful blonde heroines who would have nothing to do with them.

When the public no longer rushed to the box-office to buy such synthetic exaltations of the spirit, pitchmen like Jerome K. Jerome and Charles Rann Kennedy got out their holy apparatus and had at the trade with elixirs in which actors, their faces chalked into a pallor exceeding Harry Hopkins', were programmed as A

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Stranger or Manson and, by conducting themselves for the major portion of two hours like overly verbose and rather objectionable undertakers, peculiarly persuaded the come-ons that they were replicas of Christ and that the rest of the cast, a bunch of low-lifes, were converted to the faith by them.

Inbetween and since, the theatre public has been dosed up with a wholesale pharmacopœia of anti-atheistic sulfanilamides. It has been bidden to swallow plays which have solemnly argued God in terms of everything from the defeat of the Nazis by Hershey's five-cent chocolate bars dropped from parachutes to the triumph of Christianity, peace-on-earth and lower taxes through actors being martyred by off-stage firing squads, ecstatically wide-eyed actresses mistaking the gallery spotlight for the Star of Bethlehem, and accordions abandoned by renegade missionaries being mystically set to playing by white beams of light from the flies. But before, inbetween and since it has been privileged a minimum of plays of the species that have seen faith sharply for just what it is: a volitional remittance of cold judgment, a disbelief triumphant over itself, a puzzling, beautiful and assuaging fairy tale told by the teller to his eager self. *Magic*, in its delicately satirical, relatively short span, is such a play. In its sheer and deliberate innocence it accomplishes what any number of pretentiously long-faced plays by such much more experienced dramatists as Henry Arthur Jones, Eugene Brieux and William Vaughn Moody have failed to.

II

Mellowdrama. — It is a paradox that it should take war to convert that robust and hairy old institution of the popular theatre, melodrama, into something of a sissy. Yet once the cannon start to roar and the fields of the world are drenched with blood it seems peculiarly to lose its old biff, zip and whang and go soft. What is more, the change does not end with war's end, but continues for several years thereafter.

The conspicuous melodramas of the last war needed little more than a butler, a sprinkling of evening clothes and maybe three or four bad epigrams to turn them into drawing-room plays. What authentic melodrama they contained was confined largely to the wings, where a din of bass drum pounding and occasional red flares substituted for the pungent ruckus that erst was permitted the center of the stage.

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The climax was reached in the instance of the English *Journey's End*, which was demelodramatized to the extent of making its officers' battlefield dugout so closely resemble White's Club in St. James's Street with a light thunderstorm going on outside that one was disappointed when one observed that the chairs were in rather better condition.

The current unpleasantness has been even more contributive to the coating of the old gallery peanuts with sugar. Things have got to the point, indeed, where the Nazi enemy, which in the older days would have been thrown off the cliff en masse by Lieutenant Hal Desmond, U.S.A., to the cheers of the audience, is on occasion presented in so steinbeckly tender a light that the audience doesn't know which side it is expected to hiss. And when this generosity toward the enemy is more restrained, the conduct of the home team is often so pervasively debonair, even in the midst of dangers that would have scared the pants off the most fearless heroes of the old 10–20–30's, that the whole thing seems to be just a build-up for the entrance of some John Drew.

The heroes of the great melodrama of the past — the William Gillette rôles alone excepted — were, frequently ridiculous as they may have been, of the primitive stuff of heroes. They were men of oath and muscle, of roaring lung and derring-do, of the strength of lions and the vocabularies of barroom bouncers and Lady Astor. When they came out on the stage, the villains, however ferocious their black mustaches, knew that their goose would ultimately be cooked. The heroes of today are a sadly different stripe. They speak the language of ladies' tea-parlors; they diffidently minimize their bravery; their resolution is so quiet you can hear a pin drop; they even periodically and shamefully allow that the villains may conceivably not be entirely the scoundrels they are painted. They are in short, and many of the heroines with them, simply futile subscribers to the popular critical theory that the way to win an audience, in so far as it is compatible with official propaganda, is initially to give the villain an even break and humbly to derogate as quite ordinary, orthodox and jog-trot their own contribution, the least part of which is death, to the dog's final undoing.

As is sometimes the way of the theatre, however, it does not always work out as it is expected to. The possibly greater critical merit of the new melodramatic dispensa-

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tion doesn't entirely make up for the incidental lack of the old rousing excitement. And why should it? One goes to a war melodrama in the heat of war rooting hell-bent for one side or one either doesn't go at all or goes intelligently instead to some play of quality that doesn't depend for its life upon contemporary alarm and prejudice. (Or perhaps, by way of dutifully remembering one's responsibility in this world, to a show full of beautiful girls.) When it comes to war melodrama, if I have to take it at all, give me something straight out of the bottle in the rough, tough, bloody, battering vein of Irwin Shaw's *Sailor Off the Bremen* or even something like the old Harry Clay Blaney stuff and you can have all the Lesley Storm *Heart of a Citys*, Steinbeck *The Moon Is Downs*, Brennan *The Wookeys*, and Emlyn Williams' recent junky *The Morning Stars* from here to London and back.

III

Mama, That Man's Here Again! — About Saroyan as a playwright you have already heard plenty from this department. So just for a change let's consider another phase of him, to wit, his ability as a producer and director of his own works. Here, I am afraid I shall have to gladden your nasty sadistic souls, since you will doubtless welcome, also for a change, a piece stating that, while as a playwright he often obviously has a lot of merit, when it comes to such producing and directing he is something of a bust. I am sorry thus to oblige and humor you, since I am fully aware of the ridiculous ease of the critical technique in holding one's reading customers by one day praising and the next panning a person, thereby theoretically attesting to one's stern impartiality, lack of personal prejudice, and open mind, and, what is not always perceived, one's frequent arbitrary imbecility. But I oblige and humor you willy-nilly, because in the matter of this producing and directing the Fresno Bernadette reveals himself to be composed largely of plaster. His late productions of *Across the Board on Tomorrow Morning* and *Talking to You* have sufficiently hinted at the fact that maybe his success with *The Beautiful People* was something of an accident.

In this business of production he enjoys only a solitary virtue, and that is his casting. Regard his method. When most other producers need actors for particular rôles, they describe the latter in a general

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way to an actors' agent over the telephone and tell him to send around any loose hams who may possibly meet the requirements. The result is usually the lazy casting of the rôles with what stale available talents are at liberty at the moment, and the second result is a stage that season after season often has approximately as much lift as a French elevator. Saroyan doesn't thus complacently sit on his tail. In quest of the right people to play his rôles, he tirelessly scouts restaurants, garages, gin-mills, church festivals, Chinese delicatessens, Harlem social functions, hospital alcoholic wards and even distant branches of his own family to find exactly the suitable creatures for his jobs. And with skill and good luck he does find them.

He sees a strange young girl in a café who is the type he needs; he listens to her voice and observes her manner; he hires her on the spot without further ado; and under his confidence a Betsy Blair turns in a beautifully sensitive performance in *The Beautiful People*. He sees a colored boy in Harlem who similarly has never been on a stage, and a young Armenian cousin of his who has been picking grapes in California, and a hat-check girl at the Stork Club, and a broke poet down in Greenwich Village, and a couple of Filipinos in the Automat, and his *The Time of Your Life* stage is vitalized by a Reginald Beane and a Ross Bagdasarian and his *Across the Board on Tomorrow Morning* stage is enlivened by a June Hayford, a Maxwell Bodenheim, a Gilbert Advincula and a Sam Sotelo. Nor is it merely type casting. It turns out to be talent casting too. Or at least the odd kind of talent for the peculiar rôles that he concocts. And as a consequence a Saroyan stage, however bulky its other deficiencies may be, has a newness, a freshness and a simple delight that you won't get from many another stage paraded by talents maybe threefold heftier but so dry behind the ears that they crackle like autumn leaves.

But there his skill seems to end. He has little or no sense of timing; he goes absurdly arty in the best manner of the Chekhov and other such amateur groups and clutters his stage with nonsensical flights of stairs, meaningless shadows, and lady harpists in white behind mosquito nettings; he allows, as in *Talking to You*, a death scene to consume more time than a half-dozen road company Cyranos and Uncle Toms expiring in concert; he isolates scene from scene; he places his characters when not speaking

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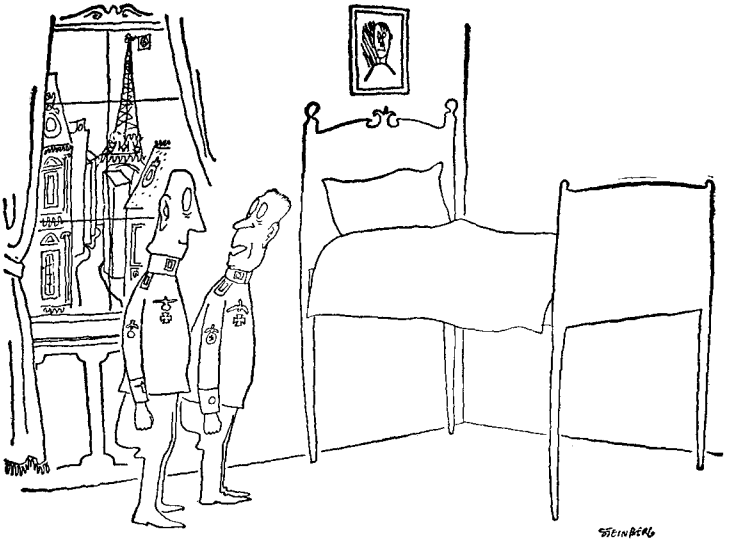
in the poses of the old living pictures. You have read that he still has a lot to learn about the theatre, chiefly from critics who swoon over the memory of Belasco, who esteem Eva Le Gallienne and Joseph Schildkraut the greatest acting team since the Kendals or even the Russell Brothers, and who believe that the Theatre Guild's late casting of such eminent and accomplished bores as Paul Muni, Walter Hampden and Fredric March proves after all that experience is an actor's most valuable asset. I, for one, hope to God he at least never learns it that way. But I hope he learns it.



"Now you'll be able to see right away when there's a bomb under your bed."

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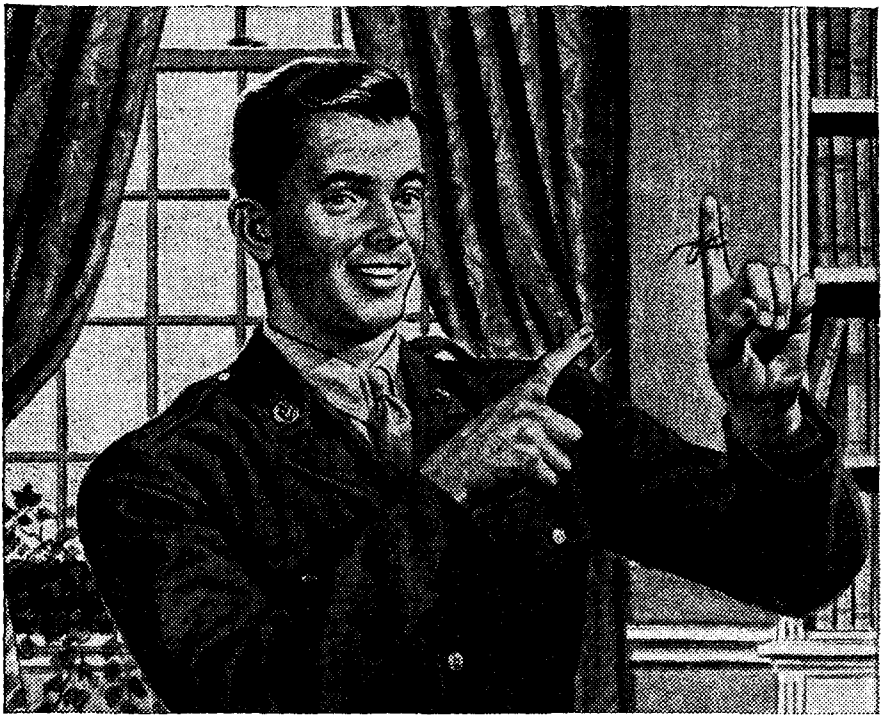

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1. Be sure that premiums on your life insurance are paid to date, or paid sufficiently in advance to allow for possible delay in arranging future payments . . . particularly if you intend to keep your life insurance in force through a Government allotment of pay, or through the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act.

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2. Make sure that the beneficiary designated in your policies is the person to whom you want the insurance proceeds paid. If no beneficiary has been designated, you should consider naming one to avoid the necessity of having an administrator appointed, involving expense and delay.

3. If your policy provides for the designation of a contingent beneficiary and one has not been named, it probably will be well to name one. Then, if the original beneficiary happens to die before you do, the proceeds will be payable to the contingent beneficiary without delay.

4. Give some thought to the manner in which the insurance money is to be paid to your beneficiary . . . in a lump sum, in a monthly income, or in other installments which can be arranged under your policy. Your agent will advise you as to the various forms of settlement available and how to take advantage of them.

5. Of course it would be unwise for you to take your policies with you. Since, however, you might need certain information about your insurance, it is a good idea to keep among your effects a paper listing your policy numbers, types of policies, amount of each policy, amount of premiums, premium-due dates, and the names and addresses of beneficiaries.

6. Leave your policies in a safe place, easily accessible to members of your family. Instruct the custodian of your policies to consult your agent or your Company if any questions arise. Your nearest Metropolitan agent will be glad to be of service in connection with your Metropolitan policies. Or write the War Service Insurance Bureau, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 1 Madison Avenue, New York City.

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THE WINTER WAR FOR AIR MASTERY

By Col. Hugh J. Knerr

(*As it becomes apparent that the British-American effort against Germany will be principally an air effort until next spring, we have prepared this list of questions as to the probable shape and scope of the winter fighting. The answers are by Colonel Hugh J. Knerr, an outstanding authority on air tactics.* — The Editors.)

1. Where do you think that Germany will next concentrate her aerial strength?

When and if the Russian defense of the Caucasus collapses, German air strength will be directed at the destruction of growing American air power. The war with Germany will devolve into a battle between two air forces. Our objective during the winter will be directed, probably, at the *sources* of German air strength. If we can continue to reduce this German strength as compared to our own, land operations may be possible by spring. Germany knows this, so I expect her to throw everything she has against us.

I believe this German air effort will be along three lines. The Germans will resume their concentrated bombing of air bases in England. They will redouble their attacks on American shipping, using more submarines and long-range aircraft. In addition, I believe they may attempt direct bombardment attack on the American industrial plant.

2. Where and when do you anticipate raids on the United States?

The Germans now have planes with which they can raid the United States at any time they choose. So far, the disadvantages to Germany of such raids have outweighed the advantages. But whenever the chips go down between American and German air power, the Germans certainly will attempt attacks on our aircraft plants.

When these raids come, they will not be directed at Manhattan Island or Washington. I think the Germans will come by way of the Arctic from Norway and will strike

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our industrial region between Sault Ste. Marie and Niagara and, perhaps, go as far south as Pittsburgh. The first raid may strike the Ford plant at Willow Run, or perhaps the extensive aircraft operations around Buffalo.

3. What does the forty thousand-foot altitude plane which Germany is testing over England portend?

Germany is quite aware of the necessity of re-arming her air power with weapons comparable to the American bombardment equipment. Germany, too, has seen what daylight, precision bombing by the Flying Fortresses can do. In the first years of the war, German bombardment planes were weak instruments. They looked good because they had no opposition. When they attempted independent missions over Britain and ran up against the improved Spitfires, they tumbled out of the air helplessly.

But Germany has not been idle. Until a few weeks ago, no German plane was equipped with a complete automatic pilot — a prerequisite for precision bombing. Now the automatic pilot is beginning to appear in German planes. Germany is experimenting rapidly with bombsights and the other precision equipment which enables the Flying Fortresses to operate by daylight. Since we have lost Fortresses over Europe, it is presumable that German engineers now have the American bombsight before them. It will take them many months to reproduce the bombsight in quantity, but that they are working frantically to do so, we may be certain. We must work just as frantically to improve our equipment.

The German forty-thousand-foot planes are immune from attack by our fighters, possibly excepting the P-38. Every factor favors the bombing plane at that height. Even after we build fighters to reach that height, they will be at a disadvantage. The bomber can arrive and be gone before a fighter can climb that distance. If the fighter is waiting for the bomber, the fighter can make one diving attack, and if he misses, he will fall a mile before he can turn back for another try. Also, the bomber crew operates comfortably in a "pressurized" cabin, while the fighter pilot must breathe pure oxygen and struggle to hold consciousness.

The foresight of men like Lieutenant General Frank M. Andrews gave us the Flying Fortress and its tremendous advantages for this winter's fighting. But we can't afford to coast on the Fortress. Germany will have caught up with

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us in a few months unless we come up with new surprises.

4. Do you think that air battles generally will move up to the forty thousand-foot level in the near future?

No. There is a popular misconception that a plane with a thirty thousand- or forty thousand-foot ceiling climbs to such heights immediately after the take-off and remains there throughout its operation. This is far from true. A bomber flies no higher than is necessary to get the best visibility of target and to find the most useful cover by clouds. Weather, anti-aircraft fire and fighter attack determine the height at which a bomber operates. If the cloud ceiling is eight thousand feet, the high-altitude bomber will drop below this ceiling for a brief period to release its bombs and will then climb back into the clouds for protection. On extremely clear days — and they are rare in Northern Europe in winter — operations will be at great heights, but there is no indication that this sort of conflict will be the rule rather than the exception.

5. Is German air strength waning?

Current air operations of the Germans indicate that they do not have an excess of means. To concentrate the attack on Stalingrad, the Germans apparently had to strip both Marshal Rommel and their Western Front of attack aviation. I would say that 70 per cent of German air strength is concentrated at the Volga as this is written. The Dieppe experiment, while disastrous for us, proved that the Germans do not have effective air superiority west of the Russian front.

I think, as a whole, German air strength is barely holding its own as compared to the combined allied air strength both in combat and production of current and improved models. The Germans have put considerable effort into repairing the error they made in freezing models for the sake of quantity. In the fighting over Britain and Egypt, they have learned the lesson that quantity cannot overcome quality in the air. On the ground, quantity can be decisive, but not in the air.

If we avoid Germany's error and concentrate on both quality and quantity, there is every reason to hope that we can grow stronger while Germany grows weaker.

6. What types of planes do you expect Germany to use in the winter fighting?

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The new series of Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs gives Germany the finest fighter team in the world. To oppose them, we have the Spitfire and the Republic P-47. The Spitfire is probably the equal of the Messerschmitt in the liquid-cooled class, but it remains to be seen whether the P-47 is the equal of the Focke-Wulf. Germany will certainly attempt to fill the air over France with these superb fighters.

For her attacks on British bases and on American shipping, Germany will rely on the heavy Focke-Wulf Kurier and a new Dornier type. I don't believe we'll see much more of the Junkers dive bomber. Improved equipment for directing anti-aircraft fire is sure to make this type of bombing extremely hazardous. In fact, American anti-aircraft crews are hoping the Germans will send over a few Stukas so that they can knock them out of their dives. We have as big an edge on the Germans in attack and bombardment aviation as they have on us in fighters.

In the transport classification, the Germans have a vast edge on us in quantity. And here quantity really counts, for it is by volume of cargo space over a given period of time that military air transport makes itself felt. Speed, ceiling and other vital qualities in battle types are of secondary importance here. The old school military mind which thinks of supply in terms of surface carriers is completely baffled by the Nazi Command's ability to assault Stalingrad in such force with no more ground means of supply. The answer lies in Germany's magnificent air transport.

Not only do the Germans edge us in numbers of transport planes, but they also have made full use of Diesel power in this class. Since the Diesel engine requires much less weight of fuel, the airplane can carry much more weight in supplies.

7. In general terms, how much air strength do we now have in England?

At this writing our offensive strength is still inadequate. General Eaker has an insufficient quantity of bombardment planes but we have the excellent British fighters and night bombers. All that we have there can be considered only a good beginning. For decisive action against Germany, we must concentrate almost our entire production of bombardment and attack planes in the European theatre this winter. We must not accept a defensive attitude in England — and we don't intend to.

Our greatest shortage in England — one that is being rapidly remedied — is attack aviation. This

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is the type of fast, chimney-top, heavily-gunned battle plane that must go immediately in front of a surface force. The big bombers attack industry and communications. But these medium planes are the ones which have to knock out enemy tanks and fortifications. Being of short range, they are more difficult to transport to England than are the big bombers, which can be flown over. To assure a successful second land front, I believe we shall have to deliver thousands of these battle planes to places where they are needed. The Dieppe raid resulted disastrously because the Canadians did not have this type of aviation to erase the Nazi fortifications and clear the beaches.

When we can operate two thousand Flying Fortresses and four thousand battle planes against Germany, we'll be on our way toward victory.

8. Will not winter weather favor the British night operations plan and handicap our daylight bombardment?

The winter season is an impartial hazard. Actually, I think it will work to the advantage of the Flying Fortresses. Bad weather provides concealment for the Fortress and allows it to pop out of the clouds at its own choosing. With the American bombsight, the bombardier needs only a glimpse of the terrain below him to make his calculations and hit his target. In fact, he can drop his bombs with city-block accuracy over any German city, even if it is shrouded completely in fog.

The shorter hours of daylight are no handicap in the small spaces of Europe to planes that travel three hundred miles an hour. Also, daylight operations result in much fewer accidents in winter weather on take-offs and landings. The ability of enemy fighter craft to follow the daylight bomber back to its landing field would once have been a handicap, but during the coming winter, this may be an advantage since we shall want to lure all the German fighters we can into England for our own fighters to take a crack at. Longer nights will give the British bombers an opportunity to reach farther into Germany, so the whole winter picture adds up to an advantage for us all around the clock.

9. Do you believe our entire winter air effort should be based on England?

We should concentrate our winter effort on Germany and her satellites, but personally I believe that more and more of our effort should be based on Africa. We

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should aim to surround the entire periphery of Europe, so that we can make Germany the center of a gigantic bull's-eye. Basing our entire effort on Britain leaves Germany the advantage of attacking the hub of the wheel from the rim. We ought to reverse this process and we can do it through Africa.

Also, more and more of our effort should be concentrated on Italy, Hungary and Rumania. We should lay waste these countries during the winter to demonstrate to Germany that there is no place on the continent to which she can move her industries for safety. We should fire the Italian cities and relieve the pressure on the Mediterranean. Italian opposition is neither willing nor effective and we can soon shoot the remainder of their planes out of the air.

10. What will be our bombardment policy toward French industry?

We must be as ruthless toward French industry as we are toward Germany's. Wherever there is a plant on the continent of Europe making any cog in the German war machine, that plant must be smashed. Our excellent intelligence in Europe will keep our bomber commands informed and our bombsights will pick out the building housing the most vital machinery.

11. Do you think that by combining our air strength and concentrating on Germany we can knock out the German Air Force by spring?

I don't think we can "knock out" the German air force in so short a time, but I think it's possible for us to be masters of the air over Europe by spring. To do this may mean stripping our Pacific defenses to the bone. We should confine operations in the Australian-New Zealand sector to a holding minimum, but we should proceed to build up Alaska as a primary base for future operations against Japan.

One threat to our success in Europe this winter is our own Navy. The Navy is now attempting to divide our Flying Fortress production and divert hundreds of these machines to Pacific naval bases to be placed under the command of the battleship admirals. The admirals have no business with land-based bombers because they don't know how to use them, and because we need to concentrate such strength over Europe.

But if we can successfully oppose the admirals on the home front and keep pouring the Fortresses to men like General Spaatz and General Eaker and General Brereton in the European theatre, we'll have a good chance to hit the Germans where it will hurt before spring.

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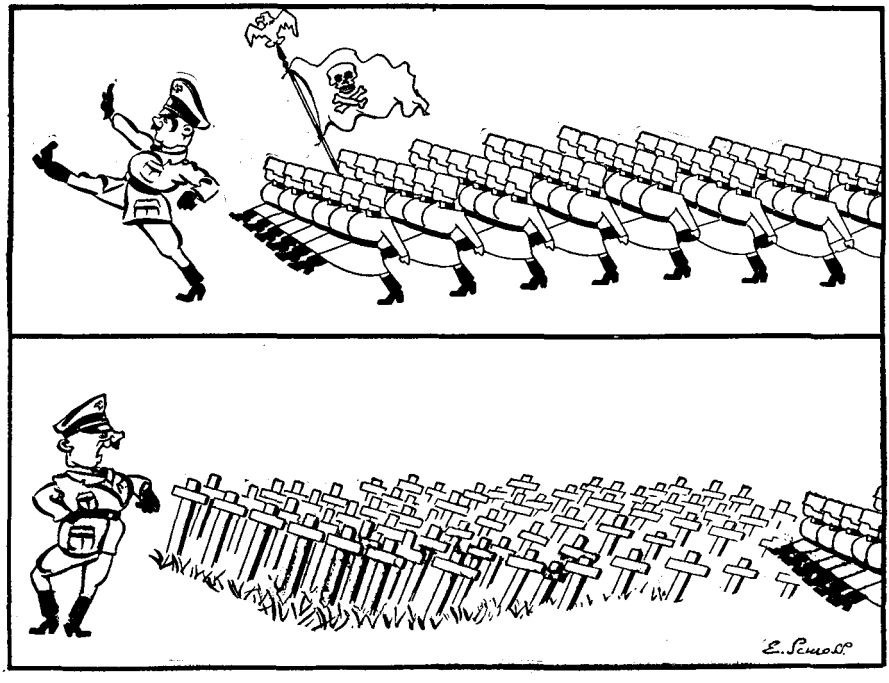
General Brereton, in the Middle East, is in a position to strike heavy blows all through the winter at the German supply lines in Russia. The heavy German cargo planes on this route provide easy pickings as soon as we can reach them. Once an air force gains an edge over another air force, the advantage of the superior force can be made to increase in geometrical proportion. Once we have gained this edge over Germany — and we are within reach of it now — we must drive and drive and force the Germans to combat at every opportunity. Our bombing raids on aircraft plants will also force this grinding together of air forces, and if we've got what it takes, our advantage will mount rapidly.

Next April 1 will probably see the air battle for Europe slowly resolving itself in our favor.



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▶ *Speaking only for himself, yet he speaks for his race:*

A NEGRO LOOKS AT THIS WAR

By J. Saunders Redding

I was listening sleeplessly to an all-night program of music interspersed with war news, bad news. The bad news of the war had not seemed bad news to me. Indeed, on this night, it was again giving me a kind of grim, perverted satisfaction. Some non-white men were killing some white men and it might be that the non-whites would win. This gratified me in a way difficult to explain. Perhaps, in a world conquered and ruled by yellow men, there would be no onus attached to being black and I, a Negro. . . . Then a peculiar thing happened. Something seemed to burst and I knew suddenly that I believed in this war we Americans are fighting. I think I said aloud, and with a kind of wonder: "I, a Negro, believe in this war we Americans are fighting." The thought or revelation gave rise to an emotion — keen, purging, astringent.

The thought and the conviction amazed me, for I had thought that I could never believe in war again, or that any war in which I might believe would be truly a race war; and then, naturally, I would believe as I had been taught by innumerable circumstances to believe. I would believe in the side of the darker peoples. But I could envision no such war even in the remote future, for I had been trained in the principles called Christian. I had been trained to believe in the brotherhood of man and that we were approaching that glorious state — slowly, but before complete catastrophe could overtake us.

War had no heroic traditions for me. Wars were white folks'. All wars in historical memory. The last war, and the Spanish-American War before that, and the Civil War. I had been brought up in a way that admitted of no heroics. I think my parents were right. Life for them was a fierce, bitter, soul-searing war of spiritual and economic attrition; they fought it without heroics, but with stubborn heroism. Their heroism was screwed up to a pitch of idealism so intense that it found a safety valve in cynicism about the heroics of white folks' war. This

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cynicism went back at least as far as my paternal grandmother, whose fierce eyes used to lash the faces of her five grandchildren as she said, "An' he done som'pin big an' brave away down dere to Chickymorgy an' dey made a iron image of him 'cause he got his head blowed off an' his stomick blowed out fightin' to keep his slaves." I cannot convey the scorn and the cynicism she put into her picture of that heroson of her slave-master, but I have never forgotten.

I was nearly ten when we entered the last war in 1917. The European fighting, and the sinking of the *Lusitania*, had seemed as remote, as distantly meaningless to us, as the Battle of Hastings. Then we went in and suddenly the city was flag-draped, slogan-plastered, and as riotously gay as on circus half-holidays. I remember one fine Sunday we came upon an immense new billboard with a new slogan: GIVE! TO MAKE THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY. My brother, who was the oldest of us, asked what making the world safe for democracy meant. My father frowned, but before he could answer, my mother broke in.

"It's just something to say, like . . ." — and then she was stuck until she hit upon one of the family's old jokes — "like 'Let's make a million dollars.'" We all laughed, but the bitter core of her meaning lay revealed, even for the youngest of us, like the stone in a halved peach.

Even then the war was only as relevant and as close as the powder plant across the river. Explosions at the plant often rattled the windows and shook the crockery in our house. But Negroes were making big money. The river steamers carried three shifts of them a day. They were a reckless and a profane lot, full of swagger and talk on seventy-five dollars a week and double time for overtime. They did not mind having their skins turn nicotine-yellow from the powder they were making for white men to kill each other. "They're white, ain't they? Well, let 'em fight. We hates peace!"

For it was thought at first that the war was more exclusively than ever a white folks' war. Long before the first contingent of draftees left the city, there was a mess about drafting. It seems that President Wilson, or someone, did not want colored soldiers. Later, the someone changed his mind and some colored men went away. By this time, trainloads of soldiers were rolling through our station every day. The Red Cross ladies were always at the station, giving away chocolates and

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cigarettes, doughnuts and coffee. "Nothing's too good for our soldier boys." But we heard that whenever a colored troop train rolled in, the ladies retired to the stationmaster's office until it was gone again.

But someone really had changed his mind completely and colored boys were not merely staying in the camps to clean up after the white boys. Somebody said the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry units had gone across. Somebody said they would not let Colonel Young go, however. They said that they did not want to make him a Brigadier-General and that he was somewhere, Cuba or Haiti or down on the Mexican border, dying of a broken heart. Whoever in the world ever heard of a nigger general!

Then somebody said that colored boys were really getting killed. And finally, we learned that in Washington they had called out a Negro detachment to guard government property. We even saw pictures in a colored paper. White soldiers could not always be trusted, the article said. A white soldier might be an Austrian or a German, anything, dressed up in a soldier's suit. But a "nigger" (I remember the word was in quotes) in khaki was Uncle Sam himself. You knew what he was the moment you looked at him. "Yes," I remember my father saying in a weary, strangely bitter voice, "that's the trouble. You take him for granted."

There was an excited, theatrical, patriotic glamor. Every Saturday evening during that summer, under the vast façade of the Court House and County Building, there was a community sing. The city band played. The words were flashed from a magic lantern onto a huge screen and everyone sang his heart out. *Over There*, *Long, Long Trail*, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*, and *Tipperary*. By the time we came to the close and the throat-caught singing of the Star-Spangled Banner, a great many men and women were crying openingly, unashamedly. But my Uncle Silas, who was with us in those days, always broke into a ribald parody of the national anthem as we went down the hill toward home.

After she discovered that Negro soldiers really were dying, my mother did Red Cross work in the small segregated unit. Her youngest brother, who won a commission in the segregated officers' training camp in Iowa, was killed. My father worked in the segregated unit to subscribe the Liberty Loans. But both my parents laughed at the little wizened white man who came to our door selling a cheap lithograph. It represented a colored

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soldier and a colored sailor, one on each side of crossed American flags. Below them was a legend:

> You fought and died at San Juan Hill;
> Now go and get old Kaiser Bill.

There were several opinions. Negroes were not fighting. They were dying of influenza and dysentery behind the lines, where they served as flunkies. Negroes were fighting. They were holding positions white soldiers could not hold in the most dangerous salients. When they died, they were being dumped into graves without markers of any kind. The positions they were fighting had no medical detachments, no Red Cross units, no hospital facilities. But they died. In any event, quite a few of them died before the war was over.

I remember that first, false, mad Armistice. Everyone seemed crazy drunk and everywhere there was a spontaneous and unabashed breakdown of lines. Banker and butcher, coal-heaver and clerk, black and white, men and women went worming and screaming joyously through the streets. I also remember the real Armistice, and that there was a block party which Negroes could not attend, and that the police would not give them a permit to hold one of their own in the narrow, factory-flanked streets where most of them lived. When the lynchings and the riots started again — in East St. Louis, Chicago, Chester, even in Washington — we knew that, so far as the Negro was concerned, the war had been a failure, and "making the world safe for democracy" a good phrase bandied about by weak or blind or unprincipled men.

And so, since I have reached maturity and thought a man's thoughts and had a man's — a Negro man's — experiences, I have thought that I could never believe in war again. Yet I believe in this one.

II

There are many things about this war that I do not like, just as there are many things about "practical" Christianity that I do not like. But I believe in Christianity, and if I accept the shoddy and unfulfilling in the conduct of this war, I do it as voluntarily and as purposefully as I accept the trash in the workings of "practical" Christianity. I do not like the odor of political pandering that arises from some groups. I do not like these "race incidents" in the camps. I do not like the world's not knowing officially that there were Negro soldiers on Bataan with General Wainwright. I do not like the constant references

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to the Japs as "yellow bastards," "yellow bellies," and "yellow monkeys," as if color had something to do with treachery, as if color were the issue and the thing we are fighting rather than oppression, slavery, and a way of life hateful and nauseating. These and other things I do not like, yet I believe in the war.

The issue is plain. The issue, simply, is freedom. Freedom is a precious thing. Proof of its preciousness is that so many men wait patiently for its fulfillment, accept defilement and insult in the hope of it, die in the attainment of it. It used to seem shamefully silly to me to hear Negroes talk about freedom. But now I know that we Negroes here in America know a lot about freedom and love it more than a great many people who have long had it. It is because we have so little of it, really, that it used to seem silly to me to hear talk about preserving it. Giving me a penny, my father would remark in a satirical way, "That's not enough money, son, to do you any good. You might as well throw it away." I did not see that there was enough freedom to do me much good. It's a stage most public-schooled Negroes go through.

We go through a stage of blind, willful delusion. Later, we come to see that in the logic of a system based on freedom and the dignity of man we have a chance. We see that now and again there are advances. And this new seeing kindles the hope that Americans are really not proud of their silly prejudices, their thick-skinned discriminations, their expensive segregations. And now, I think, we know that whatever the mad logic of the New Order, there is no hope for us under it. The ethnic theories of the Hitler "master folk" admit of no chance of freedom, but rather glory in its expungement.

This is a war to keep men free. The struggle to broaden and lengthen the road of freedom — our own private and important war to enlarge freedom here in America — will come later. That this private, intra-American war will be carried on and won is the only real reason we Negroes have to fight. We must keep the road open. Did we not believe in a victory in that intra-American war, we could not believe in nor stomach the compulsion of this. If we could not believe in the realization of democratic freedom for ourselves, certainly no one could ask us to die for the preservation of that ideal for others. But to broaden and lengthen the road of freedom is different from preserving it. And our first

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duty is to keep the road of freedom open. It must be done continuously. It is the duty of the whole people to do this. Our next duty (and this, too, is the whole people's) is to broaden that road so that more people can travel it without snarling traffic. To die in these duties is to die for something.

There are men who do not like the road of freedom, men who would block it, who would destroy it, and that is what the war is about. What we on our side fight for now has nothing to do with color, nor political forms. It has everything to do with the estimation in which we hold ourselves and in which, therefore, others hold us. There are these men, these "master folk," who hold that all other peoples are of less worth than they. It is an article of faith with them: not a thing of intellection, but an emotional thing, and it is hard to be rid of. Where these men find human dignity and aspiration, they set about to degrade and quench it. This is an insult and an injury that has at last to be avenged in blood. Nine-tenths of the world's people have been insulted. And certainly, since this insult is so patently the issue, once we Negroes have fought to avenge it to other men (and ourselves, also) our brothers in blood-revenge will not return that insult to us again, as, I say it softly, they have so long done. Certainly now, over the stink of blood, the holocaust, they will know that this war for their freedom will be a dead-end, unless the road of freedom is made a broad, through highway for all peoples forever.

This, of course, is hope. But you cannot fight wars without hope. This is also belief. And you cannot fight a victorious war without a belief in the thing you fight for. Here in America we believe, however falteringly, in the individual worth and dignity of man. Human dignity counts here.

III

But if the satanic destinies of the New Order fulfill themselves? I, a Negro, would not count. The "master folk" plainly say I will not count if their will prevails. There are people already who do not count: they are in ghettos and concentration camps. There are Jews and Poles and Chinese who do not count. And we Negroes would be done in purposefully, coldly, "according to plan." None of the precious techniques of survival which we learned in slavery would avail. They are smart and they are zealous, those master folk. They

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are zealous enough in pursuit of their racial purity to brook no interference, and smart enough to know that the lips and thighs of black women have been found sweet before. None of our skills, none of our will to live would count. We would die; and it would be better to die because we are a menace to what we hate than to live in safety in support of it.

I believe in this war, finally, because I believe in the ultimate vindication of the wisdom of the brotherhood of man. This is not foggy idealism. I think that the growing manifestations of the interdependence of all men is an argument for the wisdom of brotherhood. I think that the shrunk compass of the world is an argument. I think that the talk of united nations and of planned interdependence is an argument. I do not know what social forms these arguments will be molded into to achieve the final vindication of wisdom, but I believe that these arguments are themselves so wise and strong that they will push men up, not to a final victory over baseness and fear and selfishness, but to the height from which they can look wisdom in the eye and know that there is only the choice between brotherhood and anarchy.

More immediately, I believe in this war because I believe in America. I believe in what America professes to stand for. Nor is this, I think, whistling in the dark. There are a great many things wrong here. There are only a few men of good will. I do not lose sight of that. I know the inequalities, the outraged hopes and faith, the inbred hate; and I know that there are people who wish merely to lay these by in the closet of the national mind until the crisis is over. But it would be equally foolish for me to lose sight of the advances that are made, the barriers that are leveled, the privileges that grow. Foolish, too, to remain blind to the distinction that exists between simple race prejudice, already growing moribund under the impact of this war, and theories of racial superiority as a basic tenet of a societal system — theories that at bottom are the avowed justification for suppression, defilement and murder.

I will take this that I have here. I will take the democratic theory. The bit of road of freedom that stretches through America is worth fighting to preserve. The very fact that I, a Negro in America, can fight against the evils in America is worth fighting for. This open fighting against the wrongs one hates is the mark and the hope of demo-

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cratic freedom. I do not underestimate the struggle. I know the learning that must take place, the evils that must be broken, the depths that must be climbed. But I am free to help in doing these things. I count. I am free (though only a little as yet) to pound blows at the huge body of my American world until, like a chastened mother, she gives me nurture with the rest.

LETTER TO SAINT PETER

By Elma Dean

Let them in, Peter, they are very tired;
Give them the couches where the angels sleep.
Let them wake whole again to new dawns fired
With sun not war. And may their peace be deep.
Remember where the broken bodies lie . . .
And give them things they like. Let them make noise.
God knows how young they were to have to die!
Give swing bands, not gold harps, to these our boys.
Let them love, Peter, — they have had no time —
Girls sweet as meadow wind, with flowering hair . . .
They should have trees and bird song, hills to climb —
The taste of summer in a ripened pear.
Tell them how they are missed. Say not to fear;
It's going to be all right with us down here.

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THE EMERGENCY AND MY AUNT EMMA

A Story

By Charles Ellsworth

My Aunt Emma remembers how the Civil War cost an uncle three hundred dollars for a draft substitute who promptly got himself disabled in his first skirmish. A close observer of civilian activities in every war since that time, Aunt Emma was ready for the visit of the new air raid warden, whose appointment had been announced in the village's four-page weekly.

He stopped his car at the foot of her flagstone walk one evening just at twilight, solved the gate-latch on the white picket fence, and marched toward the front steps. Stopping only to smooth her dress over her plump figure and give a few touches to her white hair before the pier glass, Aunt Emma swung wide the door with its frosted glass panels and beamed, "Come right in, Mr. —?"

"Prince," replied the visitor briefly, as befitted an official newly burdened with responsibilities, "A. B. Prince. I've come to—"

"Oh, yes, Prince. I don't know the names of all the new people in town even if I *have* lived here since the last Indian left — the new folks come and go so. You *are* new here, aren't you?"

"Yes. We built that colonial house over on College Street last fall. My office is in the city. Now, as you have already been notified, we must —"

"If it's that white house near the corner, I went through it while it was still building. Kitchen in the front? Well — but then, they do everything differently nowadays. This is my husband, Mr. Prince."

Uncle Mark half lifted his great bulk from the corner chair, where he was stifling his asthma with pipe smoke, added "Yessir" and a handclasp to his nod, and subsided again. Light from the Grand Rapids floor lamp behind him picked out, across the room, the Adam fireplace from the old farmhouse and the lustre pitcher on its mantelpiece. Aunt Emma quickly excused herself to turn down the wick under the kettle of water on the three-burner coal-oil stove, visible through the blue-and-white dining room and the kitchen door beyond.

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In the pantry, she arranged cookies on a tray, with glasses of the syrup-thick dandelion wine she makes each spring from blossoms gathered on the church lawn next door. Old china on the dining room chest vibrated in unison with the loose floorboards as she returned to serve the new warden, Uncle Mark and herself. Comfortably settled at last in the rocker near the big front window from which she could see everything that passed on Aurora Street, Aunt Emma began to read over the rim of her glass the questionnaire Prince handed to her.

"We must now make a survey of all available home defense equipment," the new warden began to explain solemnly. "You know, since Pearl Harbor —"

"Too *much* planning!" Aunt Emma interrupted with decision. "Didn't surprise me a bit. They don't take people into account any more — just these plans!"

Uncle Mark chuckled as the new warden's raised pencil failed to intervene.

"Take that big fire downtown two summers ago," she continued. "That was before your time, so you wouldn't know — but that couldn't have happened in the days when every man around here helped at every fire, and there *weren't* any plans to speak of!"

"I don't quite see —" began their visitor stiffly.

"There was a time," she went on, "when every house in this town had a leather bucket and the merchants used to race each other across the park to the hosecart —"

"Best volunteer department in the county," wheezed Uncle Mark. "Wasn't hardly a fire they couldn't handle excepting it was too far out in the country. Even then they used to throw on water just for the hell —"

"Wasn't good enough for the newcomers in town, though," Aunt Emma finished. "Had to have a new engine, and hydrants, and a paid chief to figure out fires in advance."

"Well, of course, a modern community —"

"The men in town stopped worrying after that," Aunt Emma added. "Left it all to the new expert — he had plans for just about everything that could happen in the way of calamities. But these plans don't seem to take ordinary folks into account. Not the kind I was raised with, anyhow. A mite peculiar some of them —"

"Yes. Now about a civilian defense program —"

Aunt Emma's voice was bland. "Take the hired girl we had on the farm when I was little. A good

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worker, but odd. I'll bet she wouldn't have fitted into one of these NYA things worth a hoot! Used to spin 'round on her toes in the kitchen every morning, like a top. Claimed she got so run down she just couldn't get started without winding herself up again! Had to have raw oysters every week, too. For breakfast!"

"Very interesting. As I was —"

"Or those two girls in my Academy class who were such close friends that —" Here Aunt Emma coughed delicately. "Well, in a little town you get used to anything. It's the city folks that call the police. Things just went along, 'til the best catch around fell in love with the prettiest one. Wanted her to marry him — and even *that* worked out all right."

The resigned visitor came to life. "It did?"

"She said she would if her friend could come along. So he built a big house and had the wedding in that and all three of them went away on a honeymoon." Aunt Emma took up her crocheting. "They came back here and lived together for better than thirty years, too! What would the Federal Housing folks do with that one, do you suppose?"

"I'm sure I couldn't say. Now if —"

"Or the Browns — John Brown's folks they were, both buried up in the old cemetery. Used to live in that old house across the street there. Before that, they rented from a relative —"

Uncle Mark's pipe gurgled. "He couldn't —"

"He couldn't collect his rent, not a penny of it. So he waited 'til the Browns left home on a visit, and moved all their furniture right out on the sidewalk. Neighbors all gathered around to see what the commotion was about, and as soon as he had a good crowd together, he up and set fire to his own place and burned it clear down to the ground! 'That'll learn 'em to pay up,' he hollered.

"Ah, yes. But speaking of fires," said the new warden, ready at last to make the best of his situation, "weren't you telling me earlier, when perhaps I interrupted you, about —"

"About the big fire downtown, of course," Aunt Emma brightened. "Well, sir, everybody had the idea that this new fire chief was ready for just about anything. Plans for this, and plans for that, just like in Pearl Harbor, I expect. And we don't figure any more on little personal oddities like people used to have to allow for — people like I've just been telling you about."

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II

Aunt Emma finished her glass and took up her crocheting again. "Then, right in broad daylight, the beauty shop on the second floor of the Buss Block caught fire. The town hasn't had such excitement in years — smoke whooping up from the tar roof, and the siren on Town Hall blowing its head off, and people streaking up from every direction. Well, the fire engine wouldn't start. They'd been practicing with it so much they ran the battery down or something. The men had to haul it around the park to the fire by hand, just like in the old days. The new chief was pretty excited by this time, with his big moment getting away from him, but he got the hose hitched up to the new hydrants all right, and had the men run a ladder up to the roof. Smoke was rolling up thicker by the minute and that hired chief got a big cheer from the crowd when he hustled up that ladder and over the cornice, I can tell you! There he was, up against all that smoke in front of the whole town, and there were all the men at the bottom of the ladder, waiting for directions."

Aunt Emma rocked for a moment while her visitor waited. "And — ?" he prompted, finally.

"And —" said Aunt Emma deliberately, "he drew in a big breath through that new speaking trumpet of his — along with a lungful of tar smoke — and knocked himself unconscious. They took him to the hospital and he was laid up for days. Had to get the departments from Twinsburg and Aurora and Streetsboro and finally Cuyahoga Falls to put the fire out. A mercy the whole town didn't burn!"

"I see," said Prince, after a brief pause. Then he reviewed his position and rallied smoothly: "But wasn't that something with which, after all, you were more or less familiar by past experience? Now we must prepare this village for something entirely different, something new to all of us!" He lowered his voice to a dramatic whisper. "Air bombardment! We *must* have plans for that! True, this is a small village — but there's the junction. And while the arsenal is some miles away, it's close enough so that enemy raiders might make a mistake."

Aunt Emma pursed her lips. "What does your list say we need, Mr. Prince?"

Happy to be on familiar ground again, the new air raid warden began to read impressively. "Have you a rope? An axe? Buckets? A ladder? Blankets?"

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When he had finished reading his long list, Aunt Emma remarked: "I suppose you have to ask of city folks, spending all their lives in apartments with hardly room for their wraps, much less tools. But we have all those things. Perhaps you can tell us some of the things we'll need them *for* if the worst happens?"

"Fires — well, we've disposed of that. And falling walls — stone and brick fly around, you know! And fractures, bruises, unconsciousness, concussion, taking care of the injured —" I'll really let them have it, he thought to himself.

"You always been a city man?" asked Uncle Mark unexpectedly from his corner.

"Why, yes. Yes, I have —"

Uncle Mark lifted his head, which resembled a Roman senator's. "Used to be a quarryman myself. You make me think of the old days — twenty-five years of it."

"Tell him about the time the black powder took the Bartlett twins, Pop," suggested Aunt Emma mildly.

"Then there's farming, too — that's real exciting, sometimes. Storms, and animals, and machinery. Seems as if I've seen about everything that could happen to human beings, violent-like. Been around many accidents?"

The new warden hesitated. "I came along a highway once, right after a bad crash had occurred. A man had been killed and there was a good deal of blood —"

"Blood? Get so's you don't notice that, slaughtering. Men crushed in a rock fall, I mean, or caught by a power belt, and the like."

III

Mr. Prince looked pale.

"They happen awful quick in the country," Uncle Mark went on, "and you can't hardly plan against them. I mind the time Ed Samuels' tractor tipped over on him and a more careful man there never was. No one near but his wife, and her a half mile away across the fields."

"What a terrible experience for her!"

"'Twas. Turned out there wasn't much she could have done, even if she'd got there sooner."

"You mean she was alone, with that —"

"Folks on farms are likely to be by themselves when things happen, or pretty near. It's maybe easier in the cities, even with all this bombing we read about. Other folks around to help you out."

"But doesn't human carelessness —"

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Uncle Mark's brows drew down. "Bill Withers wasn't careless that time we was lumbering together in the swamps. Not a breath of wind stirring when that big sycamore came down on him. Just its time to fall, that's all, and him in the way."

"But isn't there some way to guard —"

"Had a team killed by lightning, mowing one day," Uncle Mark replied shortly. "Bright, sunny day, too. And I remember the tornado —"

"Speaking of lightning," Aunt Emma broke in, "just step over to this side window a minute." She led the harassed warden into the dining room and pointed upward beyond the syringa bushes to where, above the old brick church, the spire loomed tall against the evening sky.

"See that steeple? Nearly eighty feet high and so old it sways in the wind like a hollyhock. Lightning took that brick corner off the base up there. Sixty years I've belonged to that church, and for better than half that time, I've been expecting that steeple to come down on my roof any day!"

"Used to be a driver boy on the canal, too," Uncle Mark's voice continued strongly from the other room. "Not fifteen, I was, the winter of '78. Big Irish captain caught me in the dark of the towpath, racing for the locks. Knocked me into the deep water below the gates. Full of ice it was, and me with my boots —"

"The deacons can't do anything but patch it," Aunt Emma added cheerfully.

"We used to fight with bull whips in those days," Uncle Mark continued with his own private saga. "Those foreign fellers at the lock saloons all carried knives —"

"Every time the thunder claps, I think it's let go at last," Aunt Emma finished. "The day the big tree in front came down in a bad blow, I was sure it *had*. But Pop sawed that up into firewood that took us two years to burn and we're still waiting!"

"Had to watch out every day, every minute, in those times," Uncle Mark reflected loudly.

"Well, I really must be going," broke in the new official, conceding defeat. "I have a number of other calls to make and it's getting —"

Outside on the walk again, the air raid warden eyed the huge stump and estimated the size of the tree it had borne, imagining the crash when it fell. A flower box spanned the top now, flanked by the white picket fence that marched up to the gate, straddled the stump,

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and continued on up the hill toward the church.

High overhead the dark pencil of the steeple creaked against the stars. "It does sway, sure enough," he said aloud.

Standing there in the darkness of early evening, Mr. Prince pictured the black forests of the frontier crowding over the old town, as they must have crowded when the tilted headstones in the old cemetery were straight and new. He had studied those when a Sunday afternoon's walk brought him to the plot — tall stones for the heads of families, with bronze markers for those who were veterans of the Revolution; others not so tall, weeping willows incised at the tops, for the two and sometimes three wives whose strength the wilderness had claimed; coveys of small stones carved with lambs or doves for the young ones sleeping nearby. Such very young children: Mary Alice Aged One Year Three Months and 21 Days; Aaron, Beloved Son. . . . March 11th — August 9th, 1804; Elizabeth Aged 11 months 17 days.

The air raid warden shook himself and glanced through the lighted front windows for one more look at the old couple whose fellow-townsman he now was. You can't beat 'em, he thought. The papers crackled as he slid behind the wheel of his car, the tires on which — due to foresight and an advance tip — were new. The radio and heater were already on as he held the report form for the house he had just left under the dash lamp.

"READY," he lettered across it with deliberate pencil. He rolled down the car window for another thoughtful look upward at the steeple, and down again to the flower box on the stump. Grinning a little, he got out his pencil again and added after "READY" the words "FOR YEARS." Still not satisfied, he erased these last and wrote again: "ALWAYS." This he underlined respectfully. Twice.

"With knives and bull whips, yet!" he muttered, switching on the ignition.

MERCURY SHORT STORIES —

Watch future issues for scheduled fiction by Vicki Baum, Chenoweth Hall, Carl Jonas, Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein, John D. Weaver and others.

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▶ *When myriads throughout America prepared for the Second Coming.*

GABRIEL BLOW THAT HORN

By Regis Canevin Toomey

In Philadelphia, a mild, middle-aged man named Grigsby calmly stepped from his third-story window and tried to fly to heaven. A casual passerby found him a few hours later, his white ascension robe stained with blood. In Worcester, Massachusetts, a respectable citizen donned a pair of turkey wings, climbed a towering tree and tried to fly from the topmost branch. His arm was broken when he hit the ground. Another white-haired old gentleman, full of years and rheumatism, painfully scrambled up into a tree and sat there the whole of the night, clad only in a thin white robe, waiting. By morning, his aged bones had so stiffened that it required the services of several neighbors to unlock his creaking joints and lower him back to earth.

Of the hundreds of thousands of white-robed hopefuls who were astir that memorable evening, some, not knowing how they would be lifted into heaven, crouched in laundry baskets and washtubs, determined that their trip to paradise would be a comfortable one. One young woman in Chicago, not being aware that all things worldly were doomed to destruction, had a complete new wardrobe assembled and packed in a stout trunk. She had herself firmly strapped to her treasure so that both would enter the pearly gates safely and simultaneously. She was quite certain that her arrival would cause every feminine eye in paradise to pop with envy.

But, for the most part, the faithful who thronged the fields, hillsides and graveyards that October night in 1844, carried nothing in the way of worldly goods — nothing but their thin white ascension robes and an unshakable faith in the words of the prophet. From Vermont to Georgia and as far inland as Illinois, hundreds of thousands of white-robed Millerites gathered in open places to sing, shout, pray and jump about in a religious frenzy. They were waiting for the first blast of Gabriel's horn, the terrible blast which would herald the destruction of the world. Only the faithful followers of the prophet

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were to escape. It was a day of fanaticism unequalled in American history.

This was no handful of religious fanatics. It was a religious movement that had spread over all of the eastern seaboard and well into the middlewestern states. For the most part, it attracted substantial citizens. Prophet William Miller's paper, *The Midnight Cry*, boasted of a membership exceeding one million, probably a slight exaggeration. But the entire population of the country in 1840 was slightly more than seventeen millions, hence the followers of the prophet made a substantial showing in the states where the movement was active.

This great mass of converts had been gathered to the cause in a short decade of proselytizing by Miller, a zealous Bible student who spent the preceding quarter-century working on his prophecy. It was based on the parts of the Bible pertaining to Daniel and the other prophets, and the abstruse symbolism of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The awful awareness of the secret he had unravelled lay heavy upon Miller for nearly ten years after his calculations were completed and he later wrote that he lived with the message "*Go and tell the world of their danger*" ringing constantly in his ears. It was well into 1831, however, before the voice became sufficiently strong to send him forth.

"Be prepared and watch for signs in the sky" — this was his battle cry. The movement caught on almost from the beginning. It received added impetus when, shortly before dawn of November 13, 1833, there occurred what a well-known astronomer declared to be "the greatest celestial display since the day of creation." The term "celestial nightmare" would have been a nearer approximation. Untold thousands of stars were seen falling in the sky, great balls of fire hurtled through the zenith and silently exploded like giant pinwheels, and hundreds of thousands of little streamers of flame were observable. For those seeking a sign in the sky, it had ominous implications.

II

The prophet had set no specific date for the Great Day, other than a period from March 1843, to March 1844. By this time, more than seven hundred preachers were enlisted under the banner of the organization and its membership was swelling by thousands weekly. The comet which flashed across the sky in 1843 gave to Miller's followers added confirmation of the truth of his prophecy.

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The year was greeted with enthusiasm by the Millerites. They felt that the day of judgment was now close at hand. Their excitement continued unabated until the last day of the period, March 22, 1844. When that date passed without an eventful happening, the prophet was gravely disappointed. Once again, he turned to his calculations to see wherein he had erred. The rank and file of the organization were disappointed, too, but they did not despair. In the words of St. Matthew, they found a rallying cry: "Let him which is on the house-top not come down . . . and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back." They turned to the prophet again, with hope.

Once more the light struck Miller and he wrote: "I see a glory in the seventh month (of the Jewish year, October). Christ will come and bless us all. . . . Then I shall see Him . . . be like Him . . . be with Him forever."

The faithful began promptly to settle their affairs. The Philadelphia *Ledger* told on October 11, 1844, of a prominent merchant who put a placard in his window announcing: "This shop is closed in honor of the King of Kings who will appear about October twentieth." In New York City, a shoe merchant threw open the doors of his establishment and placed his stock at the disposal of the public, since he had no further use for his merchandise. In Pennsylvania, a storekeeper sent for a city official and requested that his entire stock-in-trade be given to the poor. In upstate New York, a devout Millerite (or a shrewd merchant with an eye for business) placed the following advertisement in the local newspaper: "NOTICE. As I am fully persuaded that the end of all things is now at hand, and in a few days the Saviour will come in the clouds of heaven, I offer for sale my stock of dry-goods, ladies' and children's shoes at *reduced prices*."

October 10 was tentatively set as the day of ascension, but shortly before that date, it was announced that a slight error had been made in the process of calculation, and that the Great Day was to be October 23 instead. Once again, as the day drew near, homes and property were abandoned, furniture was destroyed, businesses left unattended, and fields neglected. In the larger cities, the almost continuous services in the various Millerite churches were so thronged that it was unsafe to be caught in the great surge of the faithful. Thousands who were turned away from the meetings stood outside, praying and singing. In Philadelphia, the meetings grew

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so fervent that there were numerous cases of nervous prostration. The sheriff was forced to suspend all services there, after a young man lost his reason during one of the outbursts.

In New York, a woman unbeliever was forced to appeal to the authorities when her Millerite husband, a dry-goods merchant, burned his stock-in-trade before the door of his establishment, and refused to provide food for his wife and children. Other zealous Millerites refused to vote, because they felt it would be a waste of time electing public officials who were doomed before they had time to enter office.

In Meredith, New Hampshire, the number of devout who abandoned everything to await the day of ascension became so great that the city fathers asked the Judge of the Probate Court to appoint legal guardians so that the families of these men might not be forced into poverty. In many localities, orders were issued directing Millerites to harvest their crops and attend to their farms, or face the penalty of being treated as common vagrants. This had little effect on the faithful, who could not understand the necessity of garnering crops which would be turned into heaps of smoldering ashes on the Great Day. The fruit and grain were left to rot in the fields.

As excitement increased, suicides and cases of mental derangement began to be reported. A single small asylum in Vermont was forced to incarcerate more than twenty-five Millerites whose minds had cracked under the strain of waiting. In Pennsylvania, a farmer did away with himself and his family because one of the older children had dared to scoff at the prophet. In Massachusetts, a Millerite cut his wife's throat from ear to ear for the same reason. In New York, a deluded young man crawled to a high trestle of a bridge and attempted to leap into heaven, while farther west another threw himself into the Niagara River and met his death at the bottom of the falls. A woman, emulating Peter walking upon the waters of the sea, determined to walk across the Connecticut River. She was restrained with difficulty.

Many of the Millerite meetings witnessed the spectacle of devout men and women crawling about on their hands and knees, with one of the brethren on their backs, in imitation of the Saviour's entrance into Jerusalem seated on an ass. There were wild religious dances. Fits of exultation forced some of the members to roll on the ground in release of pent-up emotions.

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Newspapers joined with ministers of the established clergy to decry the peculiar madness so lately visited upon the country. Their pleas had no effect on the Millerites, who looked upon all unbelievers with something akin to pity. Some of the more charitable and affluent followers of Miller inserted notices in the newspapers, pleading with sinners to repent while there was still time. The Philadelphia *Ledger* carried this one for several days: "I believe . . . that the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed in the clouds of heaven . . . (I) entreat all whom this may reach to prepare to meet their God." Others demanded: "Are you ready to meet that Awful Day?"

III

The Great Day, October 22, 1844, arrived during a period of unseasonable weather. Most of the eastern United States lay under leaden, glowering skies, and along the seaboard, a hint of rain was in the air. The Millerites looked upon the gloomy skies with satisfaction. It was an ideal time for the end of the world.

The faithful poured from their homes and sought the open places — the fields, the hillsides, the graveyards. Great crowds left Boston, Philadelphia, New York and other thickly populated centers, and streamed out into the countryside. Immense tents, which had been used for camp meetings, went up like mushrooms in the open fields. In many sections, tent cities had been prepared a week or more in advance, so that the faithful who arrived early might have food and shelter.

With the coming of night, the excitement mounted. There was shouting and singing, the washing of feet, and wild religious dances. All over the country, thousands of eager faces turned skyward to watch for a sign in the heavens. A chill wind sprang up and there were occasional smatters of rain, but the Millerites ignored the weather. Here and there, one of the faithful would leap up and down in a vain attempt to reach the sky. Others, over-anxious, mounted trees and tried to jump upward into space.

It was the children who suffered most. They scurried about the camps, wide-eyed and frightened, their heads filled with thoughts of fire and destruction. The sight of their wild-eyed parents terrified them. They wandered in this sea of white-robed fanatics, waiting tremulously for the sheet of flame that would consume the world. In Phoenixville, two such children were

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overcome by the wet and the cold and the excitement. They lay down with pounding hearts and never got up again. Their parents found them on the ground next morning.

As dawn approached, there was still no sign and the light of fanaticism, which had burned all night in the eyes of the faithful, began to be replaced by a look of dismay. Hope could endure only so long as the darkness continued. When, at last, the people saw a light, it was the rising sun. The world was still unscorched by the flame.

The prophet was not a prophet; Gabriel had not blown his horn.

Now the followers of Miller, their white robes damp and dirty, thronged the roads again, sorrowfully making their way back to homes and businesses — those among them who were still fortunate enough to have either. Hope was gone from these grave-faced people. Unbelievers along the way threw jibes and insults at them, but they were so disheartened they scarcely heard. The faithful were no longer faithful, the believers no longer believed — the prophet was without honor.

So they returned, these unhappy ones, to reality. The once-affluent were poverty-stricken. Many of the laborers now had no work. Some of the merchants faced stores barren of stock; the farmers returned to fields where the bountiful products of their sweat and toil lay rotting beneath their feet.

At his home, William Miller, old and ill and tired, wept as the Great Day passed. His disappointment was very real. He was an utterly sincere man whose belief in his own interpretations was as firm and unyielding as his faith in God. Once again, he turned to his beloved Bible, to those mathematical charts based on Daniel and the other prophets who, unlike himself, were honored. Again he turned to his calculations, checking and rechecking them, so that he might find wherein he had erred.

He worked unceasingly for several years until his eyes were blinded and his bent body became so feeble that he could no longer continue. He died, then, still wondering.

The answer lay in the very book to which he had devoted the greater part of his life — in the words of the Man who was to have lifted the prophet and his faithful followers into the sky. Out of the whole of the Bible, William Miller had missed the single verse which might have offered the solution to his miscalculations. It was a simple text:

Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of God, but my Father only.

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SEX IN THE BOOM TOWNS

By Irwin Ross

Prostitution, in itself an old story, has once more been brought to the forefront of public concern. Commercial harlotry is one of the few traditional civilian enterprises which thrives on the rigors and dislocations of a wartime economy. Today, it is booming in industrial areas throughout the country. In its wake comes the blight of disease — the mercenary ladies are responsible for 75 per cent of all venereal infection. One out of every thirty workers in war industry suffers from syphilis. Gonorrhea takes a toll three to five times as great. Millions of man-days of work will be lost this year because of the dread spirochete and gonococcus.

President Roosevelt last May wrote to Paul McNutt, one of whose manifold duties is to oversee the battle against the venereal enemy, calling for an energetic social hygiene campaign in war industry. McNutt, in turn, transmitted the President's plea to 8500 key plant executives, underscoring the need "to eliminate red-light districts and other conditions adversely affecting your manpower."

The Army and Navy have been relatively successful in checking venereal disease. Now American industry, prodded by the government, is taking vigorous steps to catch up. An ambitious program has been launched in both war factories and adjacent communities. On the public health front, the campaign comprises educational effort, universal diagnosis and treatment. On the police front, it calls for unstinting repression of prostitution. Progress is being made in both sectors. The problem is formidable. Throughout the country, the prosperity of the prostitution racket is plainly visible. Newer industrial communities of the midwest as well as the older towns of the south are particularly amenable to commercialized vice. New England and the Middle Atlantic region are very inhospitable — the word is "tight." But no section of the land is unaffected.

Sub-standard living conditions in boom towns contribute enormously

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to the trade of the professional ladies. The girls often provide the only substantial amusement within miles of the factory, particularly if they combine their basic charms with the amenities of tippling and honky-tonk terpsichore. A mutuality of appeal exists, of course. Industrial workers are considered even more desirable customers than soldiers and sailors: they earn more money. In one Eastern city, for instance, the best way to get solicited is for a war worker to wear his identification badge on the street.

Old-fashioned brothels still flourish — replete with madame, bevy of girls, liquid refreshment and musical divertissement. Innovations have sprung up in recent years to elude the prying fingers of the law. Disorderly massage parlors enjoy a minor vogue in a few cities, taxicabs have become rendezvous rather than merely conveyances, beer joints cater less to spirituous and more to carnal appetites.

Even where conditions are "tight," prostitutes are often obtainable if one is willing to pay the price or search diligently enough. In one Middle Atlantic city — site of Navy and merchant marine shipyards, airplane factories and other war industry — a good deal of prostitution is carried on in the daytime, in order to circumvent the police when they are least wary. But the clients have an invariable complaint. Said one: "If you pick up a girl who is doing the afternoon trick, she leads you to a restaurant first, orders a big feed. Then you have to pay for the room. Her own price is five dollars. And that's the end of a sawbuck." Patrons who are known can gain admittance to the half-dozen modest brothels in town. Each establishment harbors one girl, protected by a laconic plug-ugly at the door.

A few juke joints cater to eager souls who cannot get into the brothels or afford the prices of the streetwalkers. A number of waitresses engage in prostitution as an extra-curricular activity, but claim to be relatively discriminating in their clientele: "I don't date everybody I meet . . . just nice clean fellows." Other girls are more interested in promoting sales of drinks, on which they get a commission, than in augmenting their regular income after hours. They engage in elaborate sales campaigns in order to loosen a prospect's purse, make promises and dates, which they invariably fail to keep.

Frequently, public pressure forces prostitution to be conducted on a clandestine basis, but the activity

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of the police is directed more at keeping the trade underground than at eradicating it. "The heat is on" in one large midwestern city, center of tens of thousands of war workers, but all the phrase means is that the girls conduct their business with due deference to the formalities of repression. There is very little streetwalking, the beer parlors concentrate on liquid refreshment, but the services of brothels are available providing correct entrée is made. Numerous procurers are eager to show the way. The cab drivers who solicit are known as "specialists," and congregate after 10 P.M. near the entrances to hotels and restaurants and at prominent street intersections. If a man is strolling along alone at a late hour, if he happens to have a slightly unsteady step, if he looks like ready money, he is apt to be accosted by a group of cabbies, each claiming advantage for his individual product.

II

A really "wide open" town doesn't bother with these niceties of law evasion. Appearances are usually considered well observed if the resorts can be kept off Main Street. Such an easy-going community is X, a midwest mill town currently booming with war orders. Its pleasure seekers are drawn from a radius of fifty miles, mostly from other industrial cities which are somewhat more strait-laced. X harbors thirty-one brothels with one hundred inmates. Along the "line" — i.e., red-light district — Negro maids, landladies and occasionally an inmate sit at the windows or stand in the doorways, openly accosting passersby.

The path to the steel mills leads directly through the heart of the line. Prices are quoted and graphic thumbnail descriptions offered of the pleasantries available inside. The time-tables of the war workers are carefully taken into consideration — a traditional accommodation of well-run brothels. Since the steel mills run on a three shift, 'round the clock basis, female entertainment must be available at all hours of the day and night. One girl in every house, for instance, has to be up at seven in the morning to catch the graveyard shift as it returns from work. The girls rotate these unpleasant early morning assignments.

The police exercise considerable control over the brothels. When a new prostitute is taken on, she must report to headquarters. She is photographed, fingerprinted and examined for venereal disease at

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the city clinic. If she is "clean," she is allowed to work. Every week thereafter she must report either to the clinic or a private physician for examination. She is bloodtested for syphilis once a month. She carries a "health card" to prove that she has complied with the regulations. Once a month, also, the madame of each house is arrested and fined twenty dollars, after which she is allowed to carry on unhindered. The money goes to the police pension fund. The system amounts to virtual licensing.

Despite the fact that the red-light district is closely regulated, the net effect is not to confine prostitution to one area of town, but to create an atmosphere in which it flourishes in all its flamboyant variety. The hotels are very accommodating, supplying the demands of their guests at prices slightly higher than those charged in the brothels. Streetwalkers patrol the business district. Their services, like those of their sisters in the bordellos, are available at two dollars, but the customer must provide the rendezvous. A number of free-lances hang out in beer parlors and honky-tonks.

Such are the conditions with which federal authorities must grapple. Their remedial program fans out in four directions: venereal disease education; universal diagnosis and treatment; repression of prostitution; and "constructive social action" aimed at rehabilitating the girls and providing the customers with wholesome substitutes for their favors.

With a similar program, the Army and Navy have made great progress. Although exact figures on venereal disease are military secrets, it is known that the VD rate in both services has dropped to the lowest point in our wartime history. But safeguarding the health of industrial workers is more difficult than caring for the lads in olive and blue.

For one thing, every soldier and sailor is treated to long lectures, frequently with cinematic accompaniment, on the dangers of illicit pleasures. The average industrial worker gets no such solicitous attention. Bluejacket and doughboy alike can obtain gratis the latest prophylactic devices, mechanical and chemical. Not so the factory worker, who is frequently less informed about the benefits of preventive medicine, and who in any case must purchase his supplies. Cost is sometimes a bar to prudence. If he becomes infected, diagnosis and treatment are free to the serviceman, less available to his in-

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dustrial brother. As for the innocent recreational and morale-building activities that are presumed to be easy alternatives to prostitution, soldiers and sailors are favored sons of the nation, industrial workers frequently little more than unwelcome guests.

The current industrial program aims at redressing this balance. The United States Public Health Service is trying to induce factories throughout the country to undertake educational programs designed to teach their workers the simple facts about syphilis and gonorrhea — their cause, spread and cure. Ignorance has been found to be the severest handicap to any program of VD control.

III

Education is but the first step. In factories which have instituted the plan, intellectual enlightenment is followed by diagnostic tests for syphilis and gonorrhea given to all applicants for employment and also to old employees as a part of their periodic physical examinations.

Workers found to be infected are induced to undergo treatment, either by a private physician or at a public clinic. Under no circumstances is a man fired for venereal disease, unless he refuses medical care. The fear of detection and consequent loss of employment restrains infected persons in many places from undergoing treatment. If the disease is discovered in an infectious stage, the patient is given a leave of absence until he is rendered non-infectious — which usually takes no more than ten days. If a worker shows serious degenerative manifestations of syphilis — cardiovascular or neurosyphilis — and if the disabilities are not sufficiently advanced to make him totally unfit for employment, he is shifted to another job in which he is not dangerous either to himself or to others.

Dupont, General Electric, the Aluminum Company of America, Koppers Coal are among the firms which have been far-sighted in attacking venereal disease. The rest of American industry must go a long way to equal them. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union has taken the lead among labor organizations.

For some reason, prophylaxis is not stressed in the industrial campaign. Ninety-five per cent effective if administered in time, in the proper manner, and with fresh materials, it seems one of the best methods of scotching contagion at its source. But instead of giving

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Whatever the eye can snatch from the black window
That night has lacquered. Night will always come,
But not with the same rapid offering.
Meadows mushroomed with roofs, the nameless shacks
About the factory; the incredible
Constellations, the plane flying
So high and far it seems a star escaped
Beyond the pane; the greyness of the fields;
The tower jetting a road of illumination,
Pastures again, and towns breathing of sleep;
The lanterned river with its red and green
Lights, like a still halloo. And then once more
The quiet grassland and the heavens whirling.
Feel, at the window, how this wary earth
Stirs like some couching animal. Those lit
And searching towers, the houses, dark
Till morning comes, all ignorant of stars:
Receive these fragments, they are yours to keep.
How will they serve you? Oh, but take them, stranger,
Though of the universe they are only crumbs.

CONVOY GOING OUT

By Gertrude May Lutz

I stood at street-end hill-slant to the bay,
And watched ship-blue in bay-blue
Curve the long shore curve.

My clothes were skin-close,
And the wind's coldness was in me
And on young faces, shore-turned.

The afternoon was long with its sameness:
Bay blue . . . blue ships . . . khaki close-figures;
And I turned and saw my thinned-out shadow
Black on a blood-red street.

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THE LIBRARY

By Winfield Townley Scott

Virginia Woolf, Klaus Mann, and Great Poetry

In April 1941, when Virginia Woolf [1] left a suicide note in her Sussex home and, stricken with fear of a mental collapse, walked across the English downs to disappear in the River Ouse, we were abandoned by one of the really considerable figures in contemporary writing. Mrs. Woolf, never satisfied with the status of women in a man-mismanaged world, had nevertheless seen in her lifetime an indubitable rise in stature of the woman of letters, and if she ever so far quitted her humor and humility as to suspect that her own work was the best of the lot, her suspicion was justified. At the very least, she brought to the English novel new values more trenchant than those of any other woman (and most men) in our time. In E. M. Forster's lyric phrase, she "pushed the light of the English language a little further against darkness."

A sentence in Mrs. Woolf's farewell note to her husband was taken as evidence that she died because she was unable to face the war, but Leonard Woolf subsequently disclosed that his wife had once before suffered a complete mental collapse and she was in fear of a recurrence when she wrote him: "I feel certain that I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time."

There followed — as though grateful, after all, to find Virginia Woolf not unpatriotic — a revision of public opinion which has gone too far in the other direction, it seems to me. Mrs. Woolf's earlier breakdown occurred during the first World War and it appears only fair to surmise that, had there been no second conflict, her renewed dread of insanity and her suicide might never have happened.

All this is relevant, I think, because Virginia Woolf, as a person and as a writer, represented a particular world. As the daughter of

[1] *Virginia Woolf*, by David Daiches. $1.50. *New Directions.*
Virginia Woolf, by E. M. Forster. $1.00. *Harcourt Brace.*
The Death of the Moth, by Virginia Woolf. $3.00. *Harcourt Brace.*

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Sir Leslie Stephen, she spent a childhood surrounded by great Victorians. She was reared in an upperclass, intellectual world (the adjectives are of equal importance) and she maintained and consolidated that position in an era and a circle that moved from Henry James to T. S. Eliot to Stephen Spender. To try to be anything less than a well-bred highbrow would have been dishonest, she was certain, so she may have become certain also that to possess her world and her sanity beyond the present holocaust would be impossible.

She was a snob. Mr. Forster states it as a matter of fact: it was, he says, her courage and not her arrogance to be a snob. He quotes her on the impossibility of giving way to sympathy: "The only attitudes for men and women would be those of horror and despair." And Mrs. Woolf herself, in one of the essays in this last collection, speaks with understanding of Henry James' reluctance to pass a workhouse in Rye because he shrank from having his sense of pity aroused. Or was it a matter of conscience with James, and with Virginia Woolf?

But the point is that Mrs. Woolf voiced a particular world. If she represented it admirably — and she did, for she was a woman of sensibility — she was, at the same time, circumscribed by it. We may never see that world again. By the same token, Mrs. Woolf's novels may, in their method, not so much influence the further course of writing as they will embalm a special time and a special way of life. They are specialized books: hypersensitive, hyperintellectual; at their weakest, mannered; at their best, brilliant.

She liked receiving sensations and she liked writing, says Mr. Forster. She was, in brief, a happy impressionist and she was an impressionist not only in her fiction, but also in her essays. *The Death of the Moth*, like her two volumes of *The Common Reader*, is altogether a delightful series of perceptions, whether they tell of an evening walk in London streets, or of the merits of Madame de Sevigné and Horace Walpole as letter writers. The tone is everywhere the same — literary, in that good sense of awareness of tradition and of responsibility to life as one knows it. Life, she thought, was a "luminous halo," yet in her books she felt its scene, its pathos, its marvel, its end and its ultimate wonder, and she put all this down with humor and with common sense. "A Letter to a Young Poet,"

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contained in her last book, is the best but not the only example of Mrs. Woolf's literary soundness and intellectual charm.

The tiny Forster essay is a printing of a memorial lecture at Cambridge. Mr. Daiches' book, the second in New Directions' excellent series of Makers of Modern Literature, uses biography briefly and spends most of its 160 pages in a critical study of Mrs. Woolf's evolution from a hesitant experimentalist into a full-fledged advance guardist of the modern novel. Novelist Forster and Critic Daiches agree in finding her art at its richest in *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, but Mr. Forster would add as best of all *The Waves*, which Mr. Daiches finds a "curiously artificial" book. Though they go at it in different ways, both would agree, apparently, that creation of character is Mrs. Woolf's weakest talent. And her greatest achievement, I suppose no one will deny, lay in her mastery of a sort of supersensory perception expressed via the novel with much of the intuition of poetry, and yet without the curse of bastardy that attends the "poetic novel." Think, for example, of Donn Byrne's work; think, even, of Elinor Wylie's novels — and you have a measure, by contrast, that evidences Virginia Woolf's triumph. However peculiar, it was a victory.

II

Klaus Mann, son of Thomas and nephew of Heinrich and brother of Erika, and Klaus Mann in his own right, has written an intensely engaging autobiography. I don't like him on every page, but then, I daresay, neither does he. He is a curious compound of Christianity and surrealism, of liberalism and Gide-ism, a mélange of Left Bank and Left Wing. He is, whatever you make of him, continually interesting and the reasons are not difficult to ascertain.

The Turning Point [2] sums up only thirty-six years of living, but Klaus Mann's intellectual activity has been unusually lively and he has found a rich variety of adventure in his movements about the world. Exile from Nazism, which alone has birthed many a book, is but one of Mann's chronicles. No less fantastic is his tale of a round-the-world trip with Erika in 1927–28, when they were scarcely more than youngsters. Klaus had published his first books and one of them had had an American edition. He and Erika had, too, cut something of a

[2] $3.00. *L. B. Fischer.*

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swathe in the experimental European theatre. Horace Liveright suggested an American lecture tour. The Manns came, a little too late for proper bookings, announced themselves as twins and proceeded, with very few engagements and almost no money, to meet everyone from Mencken to Garbo. By luck and charity, they did the country and arrived home via the Orient.

Such prodigiously bright youngsters of post-war Europe were to sober up at the dawn of Nazism. Some embraced it; some committed suicide; some fought it until they had to flee. Klaus Mann's favorite home was Paris, but he lived in Germany enough to watch at first hand the decay of the Republic under Hindenburg and the increasing power of Hitler's gang. He spoke against Nazism from the start, and was among the first of his family to be stricken from citizenship in the Reich.

This is Klaus Mann's own story; it is also the story of many young intellectuals in a darkening Europe; and it is the story of a son of a famous man. A father's fame is a weight upon a son, especially I should say if it is already rather a weight on the father, in the sense that people expect a work of imperishable genius from every stroke of the living immortal's pen and only slightly less from any literary offspring he may have. Klaus himself is beyond the stage at which he happily created a sensation at a Parisian party by announcing he believed André Gide to be the greatest living writer. One feels a genuine admiration for the father in this book, no matter what subconscious resentment psychiatrists might find and laymen suspect. Thomas Mann appears to have been always an austere figure, remote enough from his family to make even his affectionate hours with them somehow impressive. One is grateful for the story of the housemaid whose theft of his brandy brought him into the cellar and a first-class scene; one is pleased, also, to hear that he read *Tom Sawyer* to his family. There are excellent pictures of all the family — these people who adorned a life of bourgeois security with intellectual and emotional experiment, who were forced to flee or were driven from their home, yet kept always a distinct integrity.

Writing in New York and in English, Klaus Mann has made an eloquent book. He has brought it a bit too near present date: it ravels out in a fragmentary diary of his editorship of the magazine *Decision*, and in rather too recent decisions

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and revisions of his own. But altogether, it is a lavish document.

III

In the thirteen hundred pages of his newest and richest anthology,[3] Louis Untermeyer has constructed an exhibit of English and American poetry which has its inevitable similarities to earlier "treasuries" but has also its differences, some of them golden in their own right. He says in his preface:

> The gap between the casual reading of a poem and an understanding of the rich implication is great but not difficult; once the gap is bridged, the close communication between the writer and the reader is established. This book purposes to aid the establishment of that communication.

Untermeyer's method is to keep notes and commentary running throughout the text: biographical beginnings, a poem or two, further fact and comment, more poetry, and so on. Fearing at first that it might be intrusive and perhaps gratuitous, I found that the method justified itself by its success. The total effect of this *Treasury* is of an enormous amount of poetic singing interspersed with talk. The talk is kept to a minimum of information and it has the critical grace and perception necessary to keep the reader absorbed.

Whenever that misused word "great" gets into an anthology title, there is sure to be argument, and with such a book as this, the argument will whirl most hotly around contemporary selections. For in spite of Robert Frost's remark, which Untermeyer endorses, that the "right reader" can tell a great poem at once, the world is full of right readers, all of them in disagreement. Wisely, Untermeyer scarcely invades the work of very new poets; Spender, born in 1909, is his youngest. Still, the recent English-American field is recent enough and the tone and sureness of the anthology are bound to change when we get into information as to who won the Pulitzer and who works for *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Whether Merrill Moore and ten others have indeed written great poems is not only too questionable but too indeterminable to warrant their inclusion in such a collection.

Sometimes Mr. Untermeyer appears to lose sight of his title. The inclusion of Hodgson, Davies, Patmore, Stevenson and Henley carries on the record of English poetry, but it gives us no really great poems. Finally, to wind up my exception-taking, I should say

[3] *A Treasury of Great Poems.* $3.75. *Simon & Schuster.*

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that the inevitable familiar sometimes breaks down into the too familiar — Amy Lowell's "Patterns," for example — and that, in a few outstanding instances, there could be sounder illustration: a better selection of Kipling and Whittier, and a larger selection of Hardy.

But this is to find fault with relatively few pages in an anthology of great skill and wealth, one that is especially notable for its fresh emphasis on Herman Melville, on Beddoes, and many of the Elizabethan lyricists, and for its superb selections from the King James Bible which open the book. The commentary on Milton, too, is but one of the many perceptive, important critiques which vitalize this collection. And it has surprises, all the way from such neglected oldsters as Chidiock Tichborne to a recent poem by Edith Sitwell. The selections from such various poets as Blake, Burns, Wordsworth, Longfellow and E. E. Cummings, and from Shakespeare's plays, are more than satisfactory — they are expert. Ballads from ancient England, spirituals and folksongs from early America have their place. The anthology is notable, too, for its omissions: Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell and many more whom I suppose Mr. Untermeyer had to think of, but whom his readers, quite rightly, have forgotten.

This *Treasury* has been designed for what Virginia Woolf would call the Common Reader. I would caution the Common Reader to take his *Treasury* piecemeal. After a night over it, I was all but blinded by the dazzle of what it holds.

CHECK LIST

ADMIRAL SIMS AND THE MODERN AMERICAN NAVY, by Elting E. Morison. $5.00. *Houghton Mifflin.* Even as a handsome, bearded oldster, Sims remained the intractable boy of the United States Navy. He fought red tape, brass hats at Washington, dress-up non-functional ships sent to sea, was an early advocate of air power. For the most part, his wise ranting went in vain; some of it, the author suggests, is still in vain. No brilliant work, this biography by Sims' son-in-law is nonetheless a full-length, useful portrait of an important figure.

FRANK NORRIS: A STUDY, by Ernest Marchand. $3.00. *Stanford University Press.* Strictly class-room style essay on the author of *McTeague*, *The Pit*, etc. — a reminder of those imperfect, unfulfilled novels which, at their best, were eloquent forerunners of naturalism in the 20th century American novel; but a dry reminder.

VAN LOON'S LIVES, by Hendrik Willem van Loon. $3.95. *Simon & Schuster.* The old master of best sellerdom turns out another one. He Plutarchs a couple dozen of the great dead by the device of imaginary dinners with

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each of them some years ago at his home in the Netherlands. More hors d'oeuvres than meat, the book for all its nearly nine hundred pages is thin fare.

THEY WERE EXPENDABLE, by W. L. White. $2.00. *Harcourt, Brace.* Narrative of Lieut. Bulkeley and three others who fought their way out of the Philippines by PT-boat under Japanese attack. White lets the boys do the talking, turns in a rapid-fire, gripping yarn.

THE PRE-RAPHAELITE TRAGEDY, by William Gaunt. $3.00. *Harcourt, Brace.* A series of interrelated studies of the strange group of Englishmen and Englishwomen who set the pace of super-Bohemian life in their country in the years 1850–1910. The chief characters were William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and William Morris. Mr. Gaunt writes about them and their activities with some cynicism, yet with full knowledge and considerable insight.

TO HIS REFUGEE SON, LETTERS OF HARRY ARTHUR DADE. $2.50. *The University of New Mexico Press.* The author is a well-known English biologist, now serving in the Home Guard. His eight-year-old son, John, arrived in Santa Fé, New Mexico, near the end of 1940, where he was taken into custody by his foster parents. The letters in this volume cover the period between November 1, 1940, and Christmas of the following year. Full of an extraordinary combination of reticence, deep emotion and playfulness, they make strangely moving reading and stand a good chance of becoming an enduring document of these times.

FADING TRAILS. Prepared by a Committee of the United States Department of the Interior: National Park Service, Fish & Wildlife Service. $3.00. *Macmillan.* An exceptionally comprehensive, informative and eloquent report on our dwindling wild animals and birds. The story of endangered American wildlife is particularly meaningful at this time, when the country is engaged in a great struggle to ensure a fair and free land for future generations. This admirably prepared and readable document performs an unusually fine service to the cause of conservation.

NEW WAYS OF WAR, by Tom Wintringham. 25 cents. *Penguin Books.* Seven excellent brief chapters on such matters as the best uses of planes and tanks, the relative obsoleteness of bayonets, the simplest possible design for a small, handmade hand grenade, the right and wrong ways to make protective cover, and the "snobbery" in the British Army. The author is a well-known British military expert, who does not write from a library but from a vast experience, including service in the International Brigade in Spain.

MODERN PATTERN DESIGN, by Harriet Pepin. $5.00. *Funk and Wagnalls.* A thorough, easily understood and profusely illustrated book for the home sewer who wishes to cut her own patterns or adapt commercial patterns to her own individual use. Particularly appropriate in these days.

BIG SPRING, by Shine Philips. $2.50. *Prentice-Hall.* A series of sketches of life in a West Texas prairie town before civilization set in. Mr. Philips writes graphically and presents more than a dozen excellent character portraits. One of the few really good regional books.

FICTION

THE BEST AMERICAN SHORT STORIES, 1942. $2.75. *Houghton Mifflin.* Martha Foley's first editing job on the annual O'Brien collection is a good one, judged by the standards set during the late anthologist's three decades of literary gleaning. It is sad to report, however, that the American short story shows very little progress out of its doldrums. Some of this writing is mannered, some of it imitative, and much of it has a preoccupied air. The notable exceptions are even more notable by comparison, and are well worth the price of the book.

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HULDAH, by Juliet Alves. $2.50. *Scribner's.* The story of a wild, lusty, energetic woman in Kentucky in the early days of our history. Huldah's language could match that of any of the pioneers and her morals were of the vague and impartial sort, but she could build a house with her own hands and she could find food where hardly anybody else could. Her husband finally leaves her and she eventually takes in his place a judge, to whose marriage proposal she says, "Jedge, you'll be right handy to have around on a cold night." The book is interesting in spots, but it is about five times as long as it should be.

LOOK TO THE MOUNTAIN, by Le Grand Cannon, Jr. $2.75. *Henry Holt.* How Whit and Melissa Livingstone moved west from a New Hampshire village in 1770 to pioneer. Somewhat repetitious in its plotting; extremely able in its use of the times, talk and customs.

THE SOUND OF AN AMERICAN, by David Ormsbee. $2.50. *Dutton.* American music critic is caught in the war in France. He serves in the Maginot Line, has a love affair and finally returns to serve in the American Army. Written with sound and fury.

COME SLOWLY, EDEN, by Laura Benét. $2.50. *Dodd, Mead.* Curiously staid and juvenilish attempt to tell Emily Dickinson's story in a novel.

SUMMER AFTER SUMMER, by Richard Sullivan. $2.50. *Doubleday, Doran.* Nine months in the life of Eddie Nails, his wife and his daughter, Julie, while they await the coming of their second child. The problems and the joys of the little man in our economic life are well told, but the story is a bit thin.

PASSING STRANGE, by Richard Sale. $2.00. *Simon & Schuster.* Obstetrician called in to assist at a Caesarian in Hollywood has his colleague shot out from under him in the delivery room. A few more murders are thrown in before the miscreant is discovered. Not a book for the expectant mother.

THE SHIVERING BOUGH, by Noel Burke. $2.00. *Dutton.* Hitchhiker seeking warmth and food at farmhouse runs into corpse hanging from bough. To clear himself, he is forced to solve the mystery. An evening's entertainment.

TOPER'S END, by G. D. H. and Margaret Cole. $2.50. *Macmillan.* A chemist with crackpot theories on economics fills his house in England with numerous unpleasant refugees. Murder ensues and the clues fall thick and fast. Scotland Yard solves the case by tickling a witness.

TINSLEY'S BONES, by Percival Wilde. $2.00. *Random House.* A pulp writer is found burned to death and Lee Slocum, the eccentric county coroner, goes to work. Funny and has some good characters.

(*Continued on page 638*)

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THE CONTRIBUTORS

CHARLES A. BEARD is the noted author of *The Rise of American Civilization*, *America in Midpassage*, *The Open Door At Home*. As an authority in the field of political science, he is a frequent contributor to many periodicals.

GEORGE BARTON CUTTEN, for twenty years the president of Colgate University, has recently retired. Among his books are *Instincts and Religion*, *The Threat of Leisure*, *Mind — Its Origin and Goal*.

GWEN DEW has been most recently a roving correspondent and photographer for *Newsweek*. The Japanese detained her in a concentration camp for six months and she returned to this country a short time ago, aboard the *Gripsholm*. A Michigan girl, she broke into big-time journalism on the Detroit *News*.

CHARLES ELLSWORTH has been, at various times, a commercial artist, an industrial designer, a glider pilot, and now works for the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in Akron. *The Emergency and My Aunt Emma* is his first published story.

JOHN ERSKINE's literary reputation for witty, latter-day examinations of history — *The Private Life of Helen of Troy*, *Galahad*, *Adam and Eve*, etc. — has sometimes obscured his fine talent for the essay, a prime sample of which is in this issue.

GYPSY ROSE LEE, who made so deft a transition from the stage to the literary arena with *The G-String Murders*, is now exercising both careers simultaneously. Broadway audiences are hailing her as the hit of *Star and Garter*, while her book fans find their appetites appeased by a new mystery, *Mother Finds a Body*.

J. SAUNDERS REDDING has taught in Southern Negro colleges for ten years. His first book, *To Make a Poet Black*, appeared in 1939. *No Day of Triumph* is on the new Harper's list this fall. Mr. Redding has also contributed to the *North American Review*, *Transition*, *The Literary Quarterly*, and *Harper's Magazine*.

IRWIN ROSS was last represented in THE MERCURY by *Sex In The Army*. He was graduated from Harvard University in 1940, is editor of *Threshold Magazine*, and recently enlisted for training in the Army Signal Corps.

MAJOR ALEXANDER P. DE SEVERSKY is presently at work on a Walt Disney screen version of his best-selling *Victory Through Air Power*. The picture, a remarkable experiment in screen techniques, will be a combination of "live action" and pictorial animation.

KINGSBURY SMITH won two important awards for journalism last year, the George R. Holmes Memorial Award for the best reportorial work of 1941, and the National Headliners Club Award for outstanding Washington correspondence. He has been with INS for fifteen years, seven of which he spent abroad as a foreign correspondent. From 1936 to 1938, he was manager of the London bureau.

HENRY J. TAYLOR, author of the current *Time Runs Out*, combines the attributes of successful businessman and first-rank economist. He spent the months between October 4 and December 15, 1941, in a plane tour of Europe.

REGIS C. TOOMEY has lived in Los Angeles for seven of his twenty-seven years, and for the past five or six has contributed to trade journals, house organs, fiction magazines and newspapers. His research into the early history of American newspapers has netted him a fund of material on the personalities and publications of that era.

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On Borrowed Peace

by Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein

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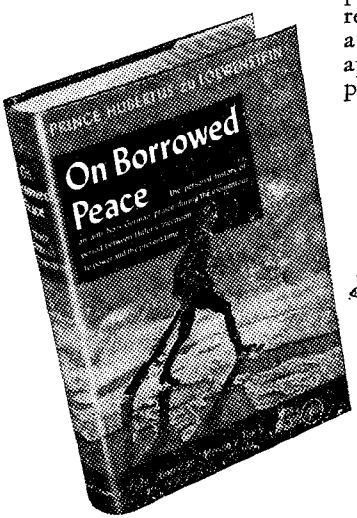

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CHECK LIST

(*Continued from page 635*)

MAJOR AND THE OTHERS, by Kathleen Coyle. $1.50. *Dutton.* Charming essays on dogs, cats, and an occasional parakeet and goose.

THE WHITE QUEEN, by Betty Baur. $2.50. *Viking.* England before the war seen through the eyes of an American girl who marries a middle-class Englishman. A well-written first novel.

POETRY

BOY AT DUSK AND OTHER POEMS, by Ralph Friedrich. $2.00. *The Fine Editions Press: New York.* Mr. Friedrich is not afraid of song and ecstasy in poetry, in refreshing contrast to many of his contemporaries. Some of his lyrics — for example, "Praise For Night," "Even on a Night Like This," and "Cattle in Pasture" — are wholly first rate. What probably keeps them from being great is the slightness of their insight: what he has to say doesn't stir one deeply or long enough. When his eyes become as sharp as his voice is pleasant, he will be well on the way to joining the truly elect.

YOURS FOR THE ASKING, by Richard Armour. $2.00. *Bruce Humphries, Inc.* A slight volume of lighthearted versifying collected from the columns of the *New Yorker*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and others. Solemnly derisive, often incisive and occasionally witty.

PARTS OF A WORLD, by Wallace Stevens. $2.50. *Knopf.* Stevens grows yet more philosophical with his years, the world and literature. A master of oblique verse, he keeps his art in fresh trim and his latest collection stands very high on the lists of new poetry.

SPRING, SUMMER AND AUTUMN, by Hans Zinsser. $2.00. *Knopf.* The minor, unexciting verse of a great scientist.

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FOR

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Major Alexander P. de Seversky and Colonel Hugh J. Knerr

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Major de Seversky

Speaking on *Victory Through Air Power*, his Book-of-the-Month selection.

October 26.....Oak Park, Illinois
October 27.....Rogers Park, Illinois
October 28.....Des Plaines, Illinois
October 29.....Englewood, Illinois
October 30.....Minneapolis, Minn.
November 1.....LaGrange, Illinois
November 2.....Chicago, Illinois
November 3.....Chicago, Illinois
November 5 ...Milwaukee, Wisconsin
November 6.....Toledo, Ohio
November 7.....Cleveland, Ohio
November 10.....Philadelphia, Pa.
November 13.....Pittsburgh, Pa.
November 15.....Symphony Hall, Boston, Mass.
November 16.....New York City
November 17 ....Scarsdale, New York
November 19.....Wichita, Kansas

Colonel Knerr

Speaking on *The Fight For Air Power*, his sensational new book.

October 17.....Chicago, Illinois
October 19..... Virginia Hot Springs, Virginia
October 21 .....Baltimore, Maryland
October 26 .....Baltimore, Maryland
October 28 .....Baltimore, Maryland
November 3.....Cleveland, Ohio
November 3 to 10....Chicago and suburbs
November 10 to 15.....Iowa and Kansas
November 15 to 25.....Pacific Coast
November 25 to December 7 .Texas and the Southwest
December 9....Oklahoma City, Okla.
December 10.....Tulsa, Oklahoma
December 15 to 25.....South and Southeast

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POETRY

YEATSY SONG

By Rolfe Humphries

Said the long thigh-bones:
When we are laid
Under the ground
Will any man
Walking the earth
Hear any sound
Arise from these,
Of mirth, or wonder,
Or music played
From so far under?

Lie quiet, dear,
Said the voice in the air.

When we are laid
Under the ground,
Said the long thigh-bones,
Will any bees
Ever be found
Coming and humming,
Make honey there,
With little feet,
In the hollow where
We used to meet?

Lie quiet, dear,
Said the voice in the air.

The loss of life
Is hard to bear,

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Said the long thigh-bones;
Why not have been
A normal wife
Under the covers?

Oh, daily life
Is not for lovers,
Said the voice in the air,
Lie quiet, dear.

Lie quiet, dear,
Said the voice in the air.

ART THOU SO LOVELY?

By Walter de la Mare

Art thou so lovely? Why, a drop of rain
Masks all the beauty thy clear eyes contain:
And when death calls thee, as ev'n thee he must,
How many roses will enhance thy dust?

"A drop of rain!" Alas, what lie is this,
When, in thine eyes, thy very spirit is!
And "death," tak'n thus in vain! — the perfidy!
When life itself were worse, thou gone from me.

SLEEPER

By Babette Deutsch

Knowing itself a vagrant patched with sleep,
Memory presses close to the window, finds
A beggar's appetite, and cannot take
All it would keep, but stares at each rich snack,
The hunger after strangeness whetted by

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due prominence to the hygienic aspects of prevention, the current campaign throws more of its weight to the social side: police action against the female disease carriers. Even the most elaborate systems of medically regulated prostitution are condemned outright, since a prostitute can always contract a disease ten minutes after receiving her health certificate, and can relay it to any number of customers before appearing for her next periodic check-up.

The chore of repressing prostitution is in the hands of the Division of Social Protection, part of McNutt's Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services in the Federal Security Agency. The Division is headed by Eliot Ness, the former Commissioner of Public Safety of Cleveland, a soft-spoken, efficient man who made his reputation cleaning up crime in his home town. In attacking prostitution around Army and Navy establishments, Ness has a powerful weapon in the threat of federal intervention under the provisions of the May Act. Fearing the incursion of the FBI, local police crack down. More than three hundred cities and towns have run the girls out of business. Unfortunately, the May Act is inoperative in industrial areas that are not also the sites of Army and Navy camps. Here Ness must rely on verbal bludgeoning in order to get action.

Frequently, the opposition he provokes is formidable. Prostitution is too often a potent source of revenue to local political machines. Even where this is not the case, some citizens strenuously favor a segregated district as an easy means of controlling harlotry, depressing the incidence of venereal disease and protecting the "good" girls of the town. The red-light district is supposed to canalize energies which might otherwise erupt into sex crimes or a universal wave of seductions. No evidence has ever been adduced to support these contentions, yet they remain quite strong. As a matter of fact, the evidence lies on the other side. None of the three hundred communities which have recently clamped down on prostitution has witnessed an increase in sex crimes.

Methods of repression vary. Sometimes the police just swoop down on a house, carting its dwellers off to court and eventually to jail. Occasionally, health laws are invoked to force the detention of infected prostitutes, thereby effectively crippling the trade. Wage-hour and child labor laws are useful in policing honky-tonks which strenuously exploit their waitress-

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prostitutes or employ worldly tots fourteen and fifteen years old.

A midwestern town of some thirty thousand inhabitants provides an interesting study in police methods. The city had possessed a red-light district for fifty-odd years. It had never been closed, not even during the first World War. The system was well organized, with police records kept of every girl, periodic health examinations, regulation of the number of inmates in each resort (six), and twice-yearly fines of the madames. Business was good. An average girl could make between $75 and $150 a week.

Last month, under strong pressure from the federal government, factory owners and local ministers, the police department ordered the district closed. Advance notice was given to the madames: they had to shut their doors at 5 A.M. on Sunday morning. A real carnival spirit prevailed on the last Saturday night. The houses were jammed with patrons, the juke boxes blared, liquor flowed freely. Promptly at five the last customers were ushered out, the doors barred. On the following afternoon, taxis moved in a steady stream from the deserted line to the railroad station, carting the girls on the first lap of their long journey to newer market-places. When the police came around to check up, they found only the madames. Over the years, their business had become so dependent on the indulgence of the police department that the usual resilience of their calling was lacking in them. Once the cops withdrew support, the old ladies hadn't the nerve to carry on.

When prostitution is discussed in relation to the Army and Navy, cogent objection is often raised to the repression of the industry on the grounds that no other sex outlets are provided for the men. Where else can they turn? Most public health authorities keep an abashed silence in the face of this objection. They can merely hint that prostitution can never be wholly suppressed, no more than any other illegal enterprise, so that a man whose psychic health depends on finding a prostitute can usually succeed if he tries hard enough.

The federal authorities approach the problem of prostitution from the public health angle: it is a source of contagion, therefore it must be checked. The prejudices of public opinion are such that health officials cannot devote themselves to public discussion of a healthy sex life for the nation's armed men. This aspect of the problem is less acute with industrial

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workers. Although possibly migrants, the men are not isolated from civilian life. They have enough money for a fairly active social life and certainly enough time to develop a passing acquaintance into a more permanent liaison.

The process to normal adjustment would, of course, be enormously speeded up if decent living conditions could be made available in boom towns — which means a place to drink beer in peace or see a movie, fully as much as a dry spot to lay one's head. But prostitution at least can be repressed without danger of much damage to its votaries. When that is done and when war factories institute far-reaching programs of social hygiene, we will be spared one of the greatest dangers to the efficiency of our industrial manpower.

"General von Strumpf favors the Life *Magazine plan, but I'm inclined to stake all on the* Look *strategy."*

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TURKEY WON'T JOIN THE AXIS

By Henry J. Taylor

I HAVE just returned by air from Turkey. There, at the gateway to Asia, I found only good news for the United Nations, better news than anywhere else in Europe. I learned that there is no possibility of the Turks "joining the Axis." Turkey will either stay out of the war, as she wishes to do, or she will fight the Germans.

The reasons are basic. The Turks, especially the present government, know the Germans only too well. President Ismet Inonu, Prime Minister Shukru Saracoglu, and Merchal Feviz Chakmak, the Turkish Chief of Staff, disciples of the great Kemal Ataturk, all witnessed the disastrous treatment of Turkey by Germany in World War I. They are steeped in the Ataturk tradition of distrust — "Beware these strange Germans," he warned. It is a national attitude. In Ankara, it comes to you in government offices, in army barracks, in embassies and banking houses and from the man in the street. Turks simply do not like Germans.

Nazi Ambassador Von Papen, now sixty-three, remains a colorful, even glamorous, figure. He is a little like a spry, though aging, movie star who still makes personal appearances but no longer gets any important rôles. Immaculately dressed, suave and smiling, Von Papen moves about Ankara with the full equipage of a Nazi nabob — shining black limousines with the swastika flag fluttering on the fender; military and naval aides done up in quantities of gold braid, saluting and clicking their boots wherever he goes. He plays tennis daily at the smart Ankara Tennis Club, often with his attractive daughter "Stephie," goes to Axis cocktail parties, and beams at public celebrations.

Diplomatically, however, the ex-Chancellor of Germany is a rather forlorn figure. He had an important job to do during the period of the German-Russian non-aggression pact. Behind Russia's back, his assignment from Hitler was to get a German-Turkish alliance which would exclude Russia from the

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Dardanelles under a Nazi guarantee. He failed to get it. Then, when Hitler attacked Stalin, making England Russia's ally, as she was already the ally of Turkey, Von Papen's Turkish assignment became impossible.

The Ambassador remains a shrewd, wily, dangerous man wherever he is — ruthless, clever, and unreservedly ambitious. But today, he can only be important as the plush and polished advance agent of an army that may some day attack. This is the way the Turks see him and it is not a rôle to make anyone the toast of the town.

On the economic front, too, the Germans have had difficulties. A grandiose commercial treaty and specific trade pact was concluded at Ankara in the autumn of 1941 by their ace manipulator, Dr. Karl Clodius. Signed with much fanfare, the pact created considerable alarm among the free nations. It provided for the exchange of goods valued at forty-five million Turkish pounds. (U. S. $225,000,000.) The Germans agreed to buy foods, tobacco, copper, grain and tanning materials, while Turkey was to receive planes, tanks and anti-tank guns and extremely necessary spare parts for German equipment already installed.

There has been hardly a drop of performance in this German bucket of promises. And the stalwart Turks will not export their materials to Germany until they receive the imports. The Nazis offer endless explanations for their nonperformance, but the result still stands. Before World War II, Germany controlled more than 60 per cent of Turkey's foreign trade: today, it is less than 15 per cent.

Under the impetus of Edward R. Stettinius' lend-lease program, and the mounting goodwill generated through the energy and resourcefulness of our Ambassador Lawrence A. Steinhardt, the United States and Great Britain have been quick to turn the German economic difficulties to our advantage. American goods, of higher quality than the Nazis ever supplied, are reaching Turkey both overland and by sea. We buy all the copper Turkey mines; and all the priceless chrome she can produce is committed to us alone until January 1, 1943, after which Germany is permitted a share.

The over-all effect of wartime maladjustments on Turkey's internal economy, however, has been extremely severe. In spite of able domestic economic direction, the pinch is tight. The cost of living has advanced 180 per cent since the beginning of the war, 70 per

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cent in the last year alone. Turkey used to export wheat, but her farmers are all in the army and now bread, made from a mixture of different cereals, is rationed. The price of wheat and of eggs has tripled, beef prices have doubled in the last eight months. A truck tire sells for $500 (U. S.). And the end is not yet in sight.

The Turkish Air Force recently sent a mission to Berlin to get important replacement parts for some planes purchased from Germany — Messerschmitt 109's, Heinkle 111's, and a number of Dorniers. By necessity or policy, the Nazis said no. The Turks left Berlin empty-handed and exceedingly annoyed.

Air Commodore Robert George, British Air Attaché, got wind of this and offered to supply the needed parts. Cables went out from the Embassy. Within thirty days, the British sent the parts: assembled from Messerschmitts, Heinkles and Dorniers shot down by the RAF, and from among German planes found hidden in Syria when it was occupied.

II

But even with such help, Turkey today has only about 240 first-line planes and some four hundred others. This sounds like a pitiful air force, but we Americans are prone to forget that Turkey is England's formal military ally. Under this alliance, the British have now built magnificent airfields throughout Turkey. As the Germans well know, the Middle East Command, under Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, is all set to move into Turkey — and will do so in a minute if the call comes. With this small air force could Turkey fight? Yes, and far better than we suppose. For the Turks are tough. Lawrence of Arabia called them "the greatest natural fighters in the world." They have a fine war spirit. They have 750,000 regulars now concentrated opposite Batum in Asia Minor. The Turks moved them there from the Bulgarian border — seven hundred miles — when the Germans started south in the Caucasus. These are good troops, well trained, well led. There are also 150,000 irregulars, trained and very effective as guerillas. They need more British and American artillery, but what they have is good. They are weak on tanks, but their mountainous terrain helps them here.

In the final showdown, however, wouldn't Turkey come to terms as an alternative to bloodshed? Or

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would Turkey fight? This was a question for the Prime Minister, Shukru Saracoglu, and this was the question I flew from New York to Ankara to ask him.

He received me in his office on the second floor of the Presidency, a modernistic, imposing building commanding a sweeping view of the lovely Anatolian hills. Shukru Saracoglu is fifty, a short, stocky man with keen brown eyes and a pleasing manner, a manner which tends to lead you out and makes you feel that whatever you are saying has his full attention.

Saracoglu emerged on the world scene in 1939 when, as Foreign Minister, he was called to Moscow to see Molotov. He told me he was kept waiting two weeks in Moscow before he was received. This was, of course, not just carelessness. The Turks at home were furious. Their newspapers screeched for Saracoglu to come back. But he said nothing, publicly or to his government. He just stayed in Moscow, smiled, waited.

When Molotov finally received him, another man might well have been frightened and useless, for Molotov hinted at certain demands. Saracoglu skillfully kept them from becoming demands, kept them on an informal basis, never let them jell into an official matter, never let them require an answer from his government. It was a statesmanlike operation.

Then Saracoglu saw Stalin. In this first meeting, Stalin himself set the tone of the relations which are so valuable for all the United Nations today.

"I want to disabuse you," said Stalin in substance, "of any fears of Russian demands."

"We received no demands," replied Saracoglu, "and we have no fears." The young Turk knew his business.

When France fell, he and his government immediately notified the British that the event in no way diluted Turkey's responsibilities under the Franco-British-Turkish military alliance. At the time of the Clodius trade agreement with Germany, Saracoglu himself recommended that the Nazis get none of Turkey's chrome. Clodius stormed, Von Papen scowled and went to Berlin. But the Ambassador returned, smiling and suave, with a personal "letter of friendship" from his Fuehrer and Clodius signed the agreement without the chrome.

It was as Prime Minister that Saracoglu, Ataturk's fiery disciple, spoke to me for his country and its place in the modern world:

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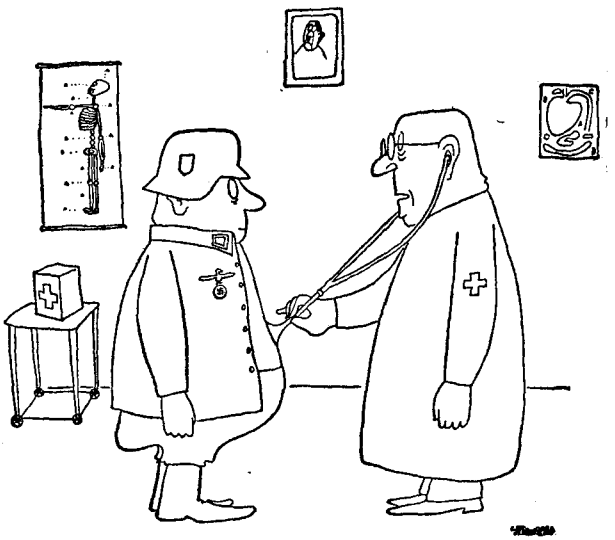
"National independence, at whatever cost, is the keystone of Turkish policy," he told me. "There will be no change in this aim to which the Turkish government has consistently . . . applied itself since the beginning of hostilities.

"For those who live a great distance away, it is difficult to realize the terrible problems confronting a country such as ours, enmeshed in a belligerent area. Our home industry, which we have tried so hard to develop since the founding of the New Turkey, has suffered grievously from our mobilization of so many workers, nearly 15 per cent of our entire male population. International commerce, on which we formerly depended, has been disrupted. It is difficult for this country to maintain itself and survive. We are faced by great armies and great uncertainties.

"*But we are ready, and we will fight.* In this melée, we pledge ourselves to freedom, and to this we dedicate our lives as free Turks. Any appraisal of Turkey's future action which ignores this ignores the fundamental of Turkish devotion and Turkish honor."



"Say 'Heil Hitler!'"

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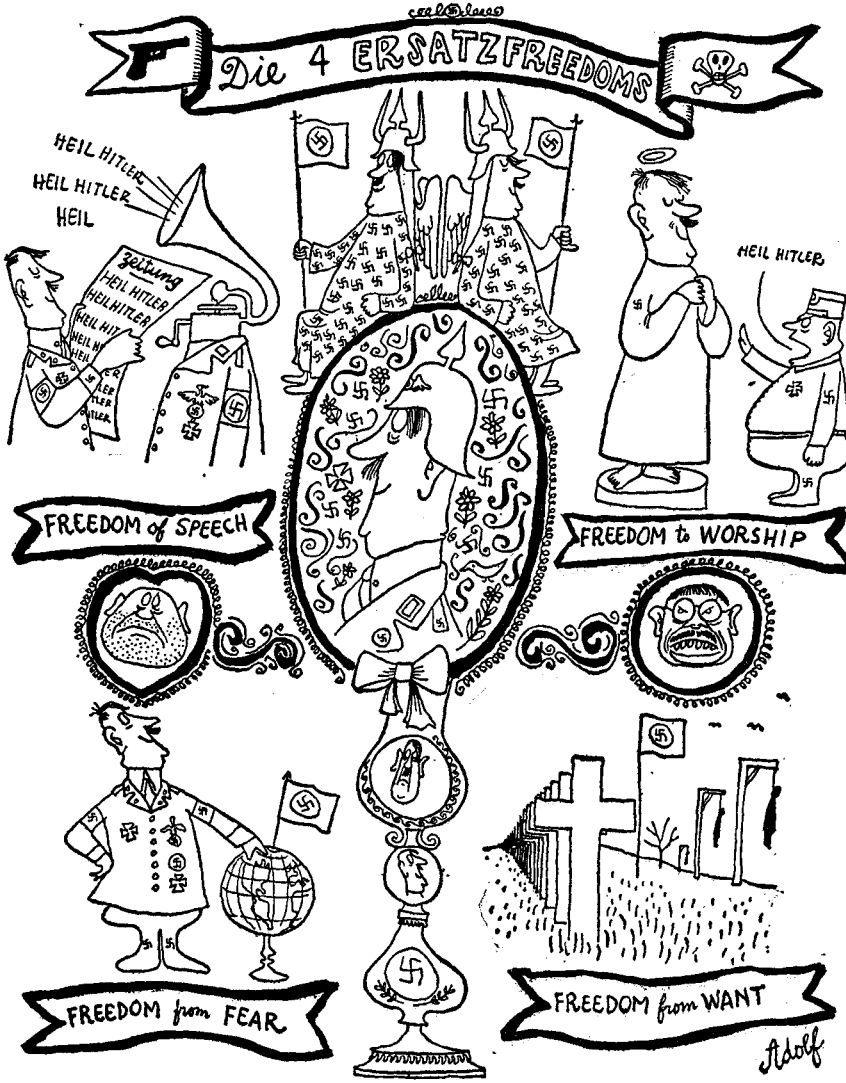

By Saul Steinberg

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DOWN TO EARTH

By Alan Devoe

Starfish: A Marine Biography

Because we are a terrestrial species, we tend to think in land terms. When we hear the word "animal," we think of a land animal: a chipmunk or bear or deer or some similar creature which shares, at least a little, our own human world of life experience. When we hear the word "earth," we think of a dry earth. We are put in mind of a tillable substance, a dusty-surfaced substance, a brown garden soil that is a habitat for earthworms. It is natural enough, in view of our arboreal and earth-walking and soil-linked history, that we should think in this way. But actually, only a little more than a fourth of the land of our planet is dry land. Nearly three-fourths of it lies covered by the hydrosphere — the seas and oceans — and upon this enormous water-covered area of land, and in the deeps above it, there teems a populace of animals quite as prodigious as the furred and tree-climbing and meadow-burrowing land forms which are our familiar companions.

Some of the thousands of kinds of animals whose home is the dim green ocean depths and the tide pools, and whose underwater landscape is furnished not with trees but with barnacled rocks and rotting wharf-piles and the submerged skeletons of foundered vessels, are related to land creatures that are familiar to us. The horseshoe crabs that sidle up, dripping, out of the sea to lay their eggs along the tide marks of our eastern beaches are biologically linked with the scuttling and sidling spiders of our summer gardens. The lobsters have a kinship with the crayfish that frequent the banks and stony crevices of inland streams and even jellyfish have a counterpart in the fresh-water hydra.

But there are other denizens of the sea world that are wholly alien to the land, having not even remote cousinship with any living animal of our familiar environment. They are wholly marine. The evidence that they are fellow animals of ours is only their participation in the great central rhythms that are common to all our various lives

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— the rhythms of birth and growth and feeding and reproduction and death — and even their pursuit of these familiar cycles of common destiny is so conducted that it does not readily make them seem a less alien life to ours.

Such a sea creature, for instance, is the common starfish, inhabitant of nearly all the coastal waters of the world. In the life-pattern of *Asterias forbesii*, a typical starfish of the waters of our eastern seaboard from New England to Florida, it is possible to watch all the activities that give us a sense of community with woodchucks or squirrels, or even with wasps and millipedes; but so alien is the starfish's underwater world, and so different from ours the particulars of its performance, that a man must have a strong sense of the web of life to recognize *Asterias* as a sharer with us of the kingdom of the animals. The animals of our accustomed experience are bilaterally symmetrical. They are formed, that is to say, so that their chief organs are arranged in pairs on either side of an axis passing from end to end of the body. A man is thus built; a beaver has the same pattern of formation; an ant or a fly or a spider exhibits it. So habituated are we to this anatomy, as the equipment of an animal, that the physical organization of a starfish constitutes, at the very outset of contemplation, a difficulty in the way of fellowly recognition.

The starfish is radially symmetrical. Its body is made up of a central axis from which radiate five similar arms. The starfish, in short, is indeed a five-pointed star. Its calcareous plated body, looking as inanimate as a pebbly stone of odd design, has not even the elements of usual internal organization to make it seem to us a living thing. Its world is without any direction quality — of forward and backward, right and left — and our habit of thinking in twos, in pairs, is not anywhere applicable to the processes of its dim and mindless underwater days. The processes, unmistakably, are our own; but the quality and pattern of them are as remote from our experience as might be those life sensations which scientists like Bose believe to be experienced by plants.

II

Motionless, seeming inert as rock, the starfish lies with extended rigid arms upon the ocean floor. Small water-spiders and caprellas drift upon its back and settle there. The currents of the water catch up its spiny body and shift and tumble it.

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For hour after hour the starfish may float and drift thus, responding with no evidence that there is the drive of a life force in it. But presently, soon or late, the stony pentagon makes a tiny stir that has not been caused by the water current. Slowly, more slowly than a snail, it begins gliding. It begins to demonstrate that, like mice and men and millipedes, it has the power to walk.

On the starfish's back, near its center, there is a nodule which is its madreporic plate. This is a circular structure and it is a sieve. In through it, now, the starfish is sucking sea water. Via intricate canals, the water is coursing through its body, and by means of a series of interior valves and reservoirs is being carried out to the extremities of the radial arms. Along all the arms' undersides, which are deeply grooved from their tips to that central orifice in the starfish's axis which is its feeding mouth, there are quantities of little, transparent, tubular processes. They are about three-quarters of an inch long, immensely delicate and elastic, and each of them terminates in a little sucking-pad. They are the legion of the starfish's feet. They are the means by which now the rigid, directionless body is performing its version of the walking of men and the prancing of deer. It is a locomotion achieved, quite literally, by the starfish's act of drinking.

In the water-vascular system of the starfish, resembling no physiological system known to us on land, the indrawn water taken through the madreporic plate flows out into the tube-feet, filling them. As each water-filled foot is pressed against the ocean floor, the starfish rhythmically draws the water out from it again, and thus creates a tiny suction tube. Alternately fastening the tube-feet and withdrawing them, making use of every pebble and seaweed stalk to which it can adhere, the starfish goes creeping through the water. It does not see where it is going. There is a tiny crimson eye at the tip of each of its arms, but these inform the starfish of no more than light and darkness. Now, as it makes its way, it keeps thrusting out a special tube-foot, suckerless, at the tip of each of its arms . . . tapping and reaching and feeling with these instruments, in a groping investigation which is its substitute for vision.

The starfish is hungry. Even as it walks, after a fashion, like an animal, so does it hunger like an animal. When it comes presently now to a clam or oyster, it has

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found its prey. The starfish is an omnivorous scavenger, engulfing in its slow transit of the ocean floor all kinds of fragments of marine life, but it has a special appetite for bivalves. Infinitely slowly, cumbersomely, the starfish creeps up now on top of its discovered prey, gradually arches the central axis of its body, and in a little while has contrived to straddle the victim. Or, more precisely, to surround it, for its five bent arms compose a kind of imprisoning cage. Now it begins to apply its sucker-feet: foot after foot fastened with suction tightness to one side of the victim's bivalvular shell, foot after foot laboriously fastened to the other. When at last the tremendous grip has been fully arranged, with many slow gropings and settlings, the starfish begins to pull. It pulls with the enormous strength of steadiness, the steadiness with which a growing vegetation splits a rock. Constantly, unrelentingly, it pulls . . . a pull of as much as thirteen hundred grams. No clam or oyster has muscles strong enough to hold its shell closed indefinitely against such prying. The starfish is unhurried and unwearying. It pulls, if need be, for hours. At last, the most tight-shut shell must fly open, and the time has come for the starfish's feeding.

III

Out from the orifice in its underside, which is its mouth, the starfish slowly now everts its stomach. Further and further it extrudes the organ from its stony body, turning it inside out like a peeled snake skin, and gradually, with delicate precision, it inserts it into the shell that it has forced open. It applies it to the body of the clam or oyster and it begins to pour forth its juices of digestion. The feeding is very slow, like all else in the life of this ambulant but sightless and mindless being, almost as slow as the feeding of a pitcher plant upon a fly. But in time, the starfish has digested the last fragment of the cold, watery flesh and is ready to move on, leaving an empty shell. Slowly, it draws its stomach into its mouth again and returns it to its place inside its body. With thrust-out groping feelers, and water-driven feet pulsing beneath it, it glides on.

Breathing and drinking and moving in a combined operation, feeding by an extrusion of its stomach — in these fashions does the starfish perform three of the chief animal rites. It performs the last great rite — reproduction — when, if female, it pours out a filmy exudate of eggs, or if male, floods

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the water with a cloudy jet of sperm cells. Commingling in the currents, the stuffs of life will presently blend to produce new millions of the little ciliated transparencies which are infant starfish. These, moulting and metamorphosing, will grow to be a new generation of stony pentagons, calcareous and noduled and seeming to a land eye as inanimate as rock, but with urgencies and behaviors transmitted to their water-filled veins which will stir them to a life course not truly different, except in seeming, from the life course of any other animal under our sun.

Land animals are subject to death by injury: by the lacerations of their enemies or the elements. Even in this last chapter of its life, the starfish continues alien to what we familiarly know of animal happening. When it occurs, as it sometimes must, that the starfish's body is broken by the buffeting of the breakers, or perhaps torn in two and hurled back into the sea by some angry human fisherman who has found the starfish despoiling his oyster bed, the starfish does not generally die. Each half of its broken body, settling to the ocean bed, has in it a recuperative power of new growth. Each segment of what was formerly a total organism has it in its power to grow into a new, complete organism. The shattered starfish, broken in two, does not die. Each half of it, instead, puts forth with infinite slowness new arms, new tube-feet, new arm-tip eyes which will give it its information of the light and dark. What was a broken starfish becomes, in time, two new ones.

Who Said Democracy Is a New Idea?

BY MARCUS AURELIUS

(*121–180* A.D.)

¶ MY CONCEPTION of a state or empire: an equal commonwealth, based upon equality of right and equality of speech, and respecting first and foremost the liberty of its subjects.

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